

LIFE OF  
SIR JOHN T. GILBERT

R. M. GILBERT



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LIFE OF SIR JOHN T. GILBERT

LL.D., F.S.A.







Yours very truly  
John W. Gilbert



LIFE OF  
SIR JOHN T. GILBERT

LL.D., F.S.A.

IRISH HISTORIAN AND ARCHIVIST  
VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY  
SECRETARY OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE  
OF IRELAND

BY HIS WIFE  
ROSA MULHOLLAND GILBERT

*WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS*



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## P R E F A C E

THE work done by Sir John T. Gilbert was little known to, or understood by, the ordinary reading public, his manner of pursuing that work was unobtrusive, while the amount and the results of it were very great.

To give an outline of his career, an indication of its achievements, and at the same time to suggest some idea of his unusual and many-sided personality, has been recognized as a difficult undertaking.

His lifelong labours in and for his country were begun in boyhood, and carried on too much and too often against wind and tide; yet his rare qualities of heart as well as mind secured him lasting friendships, not only among sympathizers, but among opponents. So little was he concerned about future estimates of himself, that he left few ordered notes to simplify the task of a biographer. Fortunately, the Archivist's habit of withholding from destruction current papers and letters which might possibly include some item of value for his work, preserved records which have enabled me to attempt to produce

a memoir which I trust will in some degree satisfy his friends, and interest a certain public.

I offer my sincere thanks to the correspondents and representatives of correspondents who have kindly permitted me to print a few of the letters of friends and fellow-workers, or others, which remain in great quantities to reflect the progress of his labours; and also to show forth something of the aspirations and movements in past years of a remarkable group of disinterested Irishmen, the working members of the Irish Archæological and Celtic Society.

ROSA MULHOLLAND GILBERT.

VILLA NOVA, BLACKROCK.  
CO. DUBLIN,  
*August 15, 1905.*

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# LIFE OF

## SIR JOHN T. GILBERT, LL.D., F.S.A.

### CHAPTER I

1829-1848

Family notes—Birth and boyhood—School days—Early devotion to chosen work.

JOHN T. GILBERT was the son of an English Protestant father and an Irish Catholic mother, who were married in Dublin in the year 1821. The father was of an old and honourable family of Devonshire, the same which gave to the world Sir Humphrey Gilbert<sup>1</sup> and Sir John Gilbert, and their step-brother, Sir Walter Raleigh, each of whom received knighthood for his services to Queen Elizabeth. The great-great-grandfather of John T. Gilbert was Edward Gilbert, of Ipplepen, whose son was Edward Gilbert, of Little Hempstone, who died in the year 1797. Old Compton castle, at one time the home of the Gilbert family, stands near the hamlet of Lower Marldon by the sea; and the tombs of the Gilberts are in Marldon church. The half-ruined castle is guarded by tall elms and firs, and surrounding it is an old-world garden, still kept trim, and full of brilliant colour. In a paper read before the British Archæological Society in 1861, Compton is described as "an old fortified manor, rather than a regular fortress." In the reign of Henry II.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.

it was the property and seat of Sir Maurice de Pole, after which the Lady Alice de Pole gave it to Peter, surnamed Compton. Having belonged to the Comptons during seven generations, the castle and estates were conveyed by one of two co-heiresses to the Gilberts, who retained them in possession till the latter portion of the eighteenth century.

Henry Gilbert, a younger son of Edward Gilbert, of Little Hempstone, owner of orchards in Devonshire, established a shipping trade between Devonshire and Ireland, importing "Gilbert's Cider" into Dublin, Waterford, and other Irish ports. With him in partnership was a kinsman named Sanders, and the firm was known as that of Gilbert and Sanders. Their Irish business having brought Henry to Dublin, John Gilbert, son of Henry, father of the subject of the present memoir, was born in that city in the year 1791, and was educated at the celebrated academy of Samuel Whyte, in Grafton Street, of whose career a long and interesting account is to be found in Gilbert's "History of Dublin."

The poet Moore, who was also a pupil of Whyte, has written—

"As soon as I was old enough to encounter the crowd of a large school, it was determined that I should go to the best in Dublin, the grammar-school of the well-known Samuel Whyte, whom a reputation of more than thirty years' standing had placed at that time at the head of his profession."

Whyte was a dramatist as well as a schoolmaster. "His school," says the author of the "History of Dublin,"<sup>1</sup> "was opened at No. 75, Grafton Street,<sup>2</sup> in 1758," by the advice of his friend and relative Thomas Sheridan, who desired to see established "a school chiefly for the instruction of youth in the English language, the cultivation of which had been strenuously advocated by Sheridan in his lectures on oratory."<sup>3</sup> "Among his first pupils were Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and Alicia, the children of his relative, Frances Sheridan, the friend and parent of his youth."

<sup>1</sup> "History of Dublin," vol. iii. p. 200.

<sup>2</sup> In 1859 the house was numbered 79. The schoolrooms were in Johnston's Court, Dublin.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix.

To this school of Samuel Whyte went John Gilbert, son of the Englishman, Henry; and a portrait of his brilliant master still hangs on the walls of Villa Nova<sup>1</sup> (his son's home), on the back of which is pasted a certificate of merit, signed by Samuel Whyte, stating that during a General Public Examination at the English and Classical Academy of Samuel and Edward A. Whyte, held on the 21st, 22nd, and 23rd of December, 1807, "Master John Gilbert, having acquitted himself in a very distinguished manner, is honoured with this premium, 1st class."

John Gilbert grew up to carry on his father's English and foreign business in importation of wines from Lisbon, Bordeaux, and Malaga—a large trade, in which the Gilberts were associated with several important London firms.<sup>2</sup> In 1821 he married Marianne, second daughter of Philip Costello,<sup>3</sup> who was owner of considerable house property in Dublin, and who had also, through his marriage in 1791 with Eleanor Griffin, claim to certain lands in Meath. Philip Costello had also been, from the middle of the eighteenth century, owner of a large coach factory, which covered a tract of ground lying between Jervis Street and Denmark Street, and traces of which are still in existence. Philip Costello's other children were John Costello, of Cloncoan and Brannickstown in Meath; Philip Costello, for some years a prominent solicitor, residing in Dominick Street, Dublin; Dr. Patrick Costello, who practised medicine in the city of Lisbon; and Alicia, ten years older than her sister, who, in 1809, married Morres Baker, Esq., described in his wife's marriage settlement as "second son of the late James Baker, of Ballymoreen, Ballyerk, Cooleroe, and Ballymore, in the county of Tipperary."

John Thomas Gilbert, the youngest of his father's five children, was born on January 23, 1829, in the house of his maternal grandfather, No. 23, Jervis (or Jervais) Street,

<sup>1</sup> Oval engraving, lettered "Hamilton pinx : Brocas sculp."

<sup>2</sup> The office of the firm of Gilbert and Sanders was in Bachelor's Walk; afterwards in Beresford Place, Dublin.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix.

in Dublin. In an old family deed the house is described as "the dwelling-house situate on the east side of Jervais Street, in the parish of Saint Mary, in the county of Dublin, known by the number of 23, late in the possession of Sir Jeremiah Fitzpatrick, Knight, mearing and bounding on the north with the dwelling-house of Sydenham Singleton, Esq., on the east by the garden of Mrs. Johnston, of Mary Street aforesaid." Its dimensions are described (in a deed of sale dated 1853, which disposed of it to Messrs. Todd, Burns & Co., into whose premises it was absorbed) as 70 feet 6 inches in frontage, and 140 feet in depth, including rear of offices and garden.

Jervis Street was named from Sir Humphry Jervis, twice Lord Mayor of Dublin, who built Essex Bridge and Ormond Bridge, and gave its name to Ormond Quay. He was owner of much ground in that neighbourhood, and undertook the above works, it is stated, to improve his house property. His long struggle with the Corporation (1698), which denied his right to be reimbursed for his expenditure, is fully stated in the sixth volume of the "Calendar of the Ancient Records of Dublin," 1896. In the eighteenth century, when Philip Costello became owner of No. 23 and other houses in Jervis Street, it was a street of distinction, as the style of some of the older dwellings still attest, though the neighbourhood is now far gone in decadence; like the adjoining Stafford Street, where (about the year 1730), in one of the fine old mansions still standing (number lost), the brilliant Englishwoman, Mrs. Delany, then Mrs. Pendarves, met Swift and other wits and savants at Dr. Delany's famous Thursday dinner-parties.

Although John Gilbert was an English Protestant, and Marianne Costello an Irish Catholic, yet the marriage was a very happy one, and such a state of things was more remarkable in the earlier part of the nineteenth century than it would be at the present time.

In 1837 Macaulay wrote to his friend, Mrs. Drummond, in Ireland—



OLD HOUSE IN JERVIS STREET, DUBLIN.





“I cannot conceive what has induced you to submit to such an exile. The last residence which I would choose would be a place with all the plagues, and none of the attractions of a capital; a provincial city on fire with factions political and religious, peopled by raving Orangemen and raving Repealers, and distracted by a contest between Protestantism as fanatical as that of Knox, and Catholicism as fanatical as that of Bonner.”

Good heart and good sense on both sides saved the Gilberts from religious dissension. Five children were born to them—Henry, Eleanor, Philippa, Mary, and John—and all were baptized and brought up in the Catholic faith. On the occasion of the baptism of John, his father desired that this child, the youngest, should be a Protestant; but the mother held firm. “You think,” urged the father, “that you are providing better things for him in a future existence; but, believe me, you are doing your son a grievous wrong, where this world is concerned”—a prophetic statement which did not, however, daunt the resolute woman, and little John was made a Catholic, like his brothers and sisters.

Their father dying in 1833, at the age of forty-two, the mother had complete control of the education of the children, who had, fortunately, not been old enough to realize any difference in the religious doctrines held by their parents, and who revered the memory of their father’s great integrity of purpose and pious attitude towards Providence. Of these fine qualities John Gilbert the elder left a simple accidental record, when, at the opening of the year 1829, fourteen days before the birth of his son John, having reviewed his worldly affairs, he scribbled on the margin of the sheet of paper, which showed the goodly sum he found himself “worth, clear of the world, this day,” the following little note:—

“For which I am bound in gratitude to feel most thankful to that Divine Being who has been pleased to crown my exertions and prosper my undertakings. Dublin, January 9, 1829.”

There is also an evidence of his humane disposition in the

circumstance which led to his accepting the Consulship of Portugal and Algarve. A Portuguese vessel having been wrecked on the Irish coast, he provided for the wants of the crew, and sent them back to their native country in a vessel of his own, upon which the Portuguese Government sent for his acceptance a table-service of Portuguese silver, with an offer of the Consulship.

His will, made at his country house at Kimmage in 1833, bequeaths to his beloved wife, after payment of his just debts, all his property, consisting of cash, bills, merchandize, and debts due, his interest in the house, 23, Jervis Street, and all furniture and goods therein, and the schooner *Czar*, for herself, and for "educating and providing for our dear little children, which I am satisfied she will do to the best of her ability;" after her decease the remaining property to be divided share and share alike among the children. She was sole executrix, and in case of her death, her brothers John and Philip Costello were to act as guardians of the children. Both these brothers were dead, however, when, in August, 1841, Mrs. Gilbert wrote on a leaf of the Bible, in which her husband had recorded their marriage and the births of their children, "John Gilbert, my dearly beloved and ever-to-be-regretted husband, died 3 August, 1833, leaving me with five helpless children, the eldest not eleven years old. It has pleased the Will of Divine Providence to spare me over them, and to enable me to educate them so far." After this comes a list of the deaths of relatives, friends, and servants, showing the tender regard in which she held all who in any way belonged to her.

Mrs. Gilbert was at the time of her husband's death thirty-six years of age, handsome and accomplished, accustomed to lean on and look up to a devoted husband, and to enjoy with him the pleasures and luxuries of life. Of a very gentle disposition, her strong character developed in proportion as necessity required her to act independently and with courage. Resolved to preserve for her sons the old-established and lucrative trade of their father and grandfather, she employed a manager to carry on affairs, and exercised her own fine

intelligence in overseeing and checking important business transactions and negotiations. The house at Kimmage was prudently given up, and the country outlet for the family was Brannickstown, while the town residence of Mrs. Gilbert and her children was with her mother, Mrs. Eleanor Costello, in the old house in Jervis Street, her father, Philip Costello, having died in 1808. The widow's chief care was the education of her children. Henry, the eldest, was sent to school; the little girls had the advantage of a competent governess under their mother's supervision; John, the youngest, was then only four years old, the pet of the gentle old grandmother, who, as he recalled in his latest years, would quell his occasional turbulence with a sweetly spoken "Softly, child, softly!" Interesting notes of these early days remain among the private papers of the family, who destroyed few writings, and preserved many kinds of relics from both sides of the house, English and Irish; genealogical records, marriage settlements, wills, old leases, deeds relating to property, judgments in chancery; private diaries and letters, from which romances might be written. In the same manner the Gilberts treasured and revered their old portraits, old furniture, silver and china, some of which had come from Devonshire in the latter part of the eighteenth century, curious trinkets and family watches, not less than two or three hundred years in existence.

In the first years of Mrs. Gilbert's widowhood her three brothers were all living. John Costello, the eldest and best beloved of the three, was in possession of Brannickstown and Cloncoan, which he had inherited from his uncle, Daniel Griffin; and the Gilbert children, who were all of delicate constitution, enjoyed happy holidays in his home. In July, 1836, he writes to his sister—

"Philippa is well, thank God, and on the most happy terms with us all. The improvement in her health, which I flattered myself a few weeks' residence here would produce, does not yet appear to have taken place. Although she is not, to use a vulgar phrase, 'getting fat,' she does not in the

mean time betray any symptoms of illness. As lively as a bee, she never appears happy except when in the company of her little cousins, or her aunt, on whom she bestows many fond caresses. I cannot induce her to write, but she desires me to present you, her grandmama, and the family with her most affectionate remembrances."

The bracing atmosphere of the fields and woods of Meath was good for the children. In one of Mary Gilbert's Italian school-books there runs a little note in a childish scrawl, "Here we are, just arrived from Brannickstown, all feeling very good, having done the Jubilee!" A relative of their grandmother, Father Murray, was parish priest of Trim, one of the priests of the old school, who, under ban at home, obtained their ecclesiastical education in France or Spain. Father Murray was the owner of a choice library, and from this good and learned man, and among his books, the little John Gilbert developed very early his passion for historical lore. A further personal link with Catholic foreign lands was Dr. Patrick Costello, another brother of Mrs. Gilbert, who was then practising medicine in Lisbon, and writing interesting letters to his mother at home.

In the year 1838 the beloved uncle, John Costello, died, and to Mrs. Gilbert's anxieties was added the guardianship of his orphan children, who had also lost their mother. Large-hearted and strong of mind, she was equal to all tasks laid upon her. One of her nieces writes, "She was, indeed, a mother to us, and made no difference between us and her own children." Into her home were also received her widowed sister and her sister's daughter, Morres Baker having died, and his affairs having got into chancery, with disastrous results. The care of the property at Brannickstown devolved on her, and the steward's book still shows with what pains she fulfilled this—like every other trust.

Meanwhile little John's education was progressing. In 1836 (being seven years old) he distinguished himself at St. Vincent's Seminary,<sup>1</sup> Usher's Quay, "particularly in

<sup>1</sup> About this time removed to Castleknock, co. Dublin, for the inauguration of the present well-known college of that name.

history." From this period dates a literary composition preserved by a fond mother, addressed to Mr. Ricard, one of his masters, indorsed by him "extremely well," and remarkable chiefly for the signature, already characteristic. A little later he was a pupil of Bective College, and at twelve years old was sent to Prior Park College, near Bath, at that time a first-class school, one of the best for Catholic youth in England and Ireland. In the lists of the classes in the early forties are found the names of Edward and Oswald Petre, Hugh O'Connor, Sir James Fitzgerald, with Chichesters, Butlers, De Blaquieres, O'Connells, and many other English and Irish names representative of the old faith in these islands.

From Prior Park College was written an early letter, treasured among a mother's papers—

"Prior Park, May 24, 1842.

"MY DEAR MAMMA,

"Gilbert Sanders came to see me on the 23rd, and took me to Bath, where he showed me great kindness, and got me everything that I want, except what was impossible. I think the best way for you is to write to Mr. Illingworth, and he will get me all. I think you ought to take me home in the vacation, because you promised it solemnly. The chief excuse you have is because you say it will distract my mind from study. Now, I will promise if you take me home I will study as hard as will lie in my power: but, if you do not, it will be quite impossible for me to study hard, as I will be quite dispirited.

"Again, you say I will have much more pleasure here than in Dublin. Now this is quite the contrary, for our only pleasure is to walk about the bounds and go bathing in a river where there is a dreadful steep hill, so that we are twice as warm after bathing as before. . . . For the whole year past the chief object of my studies was to please you, that you might be glad to fulfil your promise; but since I heard you hinting about not taking me home I am quite dispirited,

and cannot attend to my studies with half that ardour and pleasure which I used to do when I expected you to fulfil your promise. . . . Give my love to all at home, not forgetting Nurse. How is Farrell Fagan? Tell Mary and Henry I expect that they will write to me. I am very much obliged for the nice box you sent me. I hope you will excuse the blots on the paper, but I cannot restrain my tears at your breaking your promise, and, of course, if you disappoint me, I must also disappoint you.

“ I remain, your affectionate son,  
“ JOHN THOMAS GILBERT.

“ N.B.—Write by return of post.”

Every schoolboy will hope that the mother did not disappoint him on this occasion ; at all events, it is quite certain that he never disappointed her. The blots on the letter are genuine tear-blots, which have almost washed away some of the words.

The Rev. Mr. Illingworth, head of the college, replies to a letter from his mother—

“ The flattering account which you have on another sheet I trust will repay you for the extreme anxiety which you testify towards your son. That he will be a talented and clever youth is beyond a doubt, and his character and good qualities will be equal to his abilities.”

During his school-days he developed that vigorous will and the passion which must be ingrained in every strong character, for in the same letter his master asks his mother to write him affectionate advice as to the curbing of his temper. The lesson of control was well learned, for it was said of Gilbert that few men are able to reserve such depth of feeling under manners so gentle and courteous as were his.

The anxious mother had the pleasure of knowing that her boy was always head of his class, and examination papers recording his various distinctions, as well as the silver medal of the college, are all among the family treasures. The lad

of thirteen had the schoolboy's trick of scribbling in his books, and his copy of the "Anabasis" of Xenophon is marked with many such notes. On the first page it informs all whom it may concern that "John Gilbert went to Prior Park in 1841," and on the last is inscribed a list of the twelve members of his class, in order of class, John Gilbert being at the head; also the names of his several masters in Latin and Greek, French, Italian, German, History, and Arithmetic.

## ORDER OF CLASS.

John Gilbert.	John Kennedy.
Alex Morphy.	Leopold Guibara.
John Pitchford.	James Costello.
Austin Latham.	John Costello.
Charles Kennedy.	D. Murphy.
Richard Guibara.	F. Blake.

Masters: Latin and Greek, C. Parfitt; Italian, Rev. Mr. Sheehy; French, M. Cauche; German, M. Fander; Arithmetic and History, L. Sheppard.

On another leaf it is stated that J. Gilbert began the "Anabasis" of Xenophon on September 12, 1842, at Prior Park, Bath; and on each of five different pages a warning to imaginary thieves is given in five different languages—Latin, Greek, Italian, French, and English, the last version of the usual schoolboy's legend running as follows:—

"Steal not this book for fear of shame,  
For here you see the owner's name.

"J. GILBERT."

The happy holidays were spent at Brannickstown, a place which was a source of infinite delight to the young Gilberts, and always remained in their memory, linked with the most tender and romantic associations. Here it was that John acquired his intense love of nature, and sympathy with all living creatures—birds, squirrels, and other shy wild tenants of trees, and holes, and hedges, who were never afraid to

approach him ; also of flowers and running water, and every lovely growing thing. The holidays were passed by him in roaming over the country, or sitting in a quiet library nook studying his favourite subjects, and already laying up historic and antiquarian lore. He was also zealously at work in acquiring that skill in palæography which so early in life placed a power in his hands. A manuscript book is found among some of his schoolboy papers which contains a curious collection of extracts from old chronicles, copied exactly in the writing of the chronicler ; also passages from various ancient authors, statements of facts, records of remarkable events, historical and biographical data, all inscribed in different styles of ancient calligraphy. In the matter of the contents of this whimsical-seeming book, with its deep underlying purpose, it is evident that the passion for historical research had already mastered the boy of fourteen years. The date on the book is 1843 ; the following lines of Southey, in his handwriting, are inscribed on the first page :—

“ My days among the dead are passed :  
 Around me I behold,  
 Where'er these casual eyes are cast,  
 The mighty men of old.  
 My never-failing friends are they,  
 With whom I converse night and day.”

To the last he looked back with affection on the fields and woods of Meath, away beyond the old storied town of Trim. A curious incident connected with them in his memory was narrated by him late in life to one in whom he wholly confided, an experience unlike anything that might have been expected of a lad whose dreams were all of revealing truth by documentary evidence, rather than of visionary manifestations of the unknowable. Yet he told the story in a simple and vivid manner, which left no doubt of the impression made on a mind which preserved it unaltered for more than fifty years.

On one of those happy holidays, as a youth of sixteen, carrying a gun, he had passed through a little wood which opened abruptly on a wide stretch of fields, and was divided



and screened from them by a bank and bushes. About to spring through a gap in the bushy bank, he started back as an amazing figure passed before him, beyond the gap, traversing the field-path, on its other side, yet close to him. He described this as the most beautiful being imaginable, noble in face, form, and bearing, clad in brilliant diaphanous garments. The figure having passed, he sprang through the opening, eager to see it again, but nothing was visible except the lonely field-path stretching far away on either side of him in the sunshine of a midsummer's morning. He at once set to work to search in all directions, but no one in the neighbourhood had seen or heard anything of such a surprising wayfarer. When questioned again and again after long years of struggling with "the document" and sifting written evidence, the man adhered to his testimony of what the boy's eyes had seen. He did not undertake to say of what nature was the extraordinary being who had brushed him with shining garments, and had filled his eyes with more than earthly beauty. He gave his experience for what it might be worth. So many tales are told of uncanny apparitions seen in darkness and hinting of doom or penal durance, that it is good to hear of one which suggests the probability of celestial visitors walking in our midst in the noonday sunshine.

At this time the young Gilberts were an interesting group, of refined and sensitive natures, and with many personal attractions. The girls had an educated taste in literature, were acquainted with modern languages, accomplished in all the dainty arts of their day, and were, besides, notable housekeepers. Marvellous needlework of the grandmother and mother, and the great old embroidery frame still standing on its legs, remain to tell of patient feminine industry, and the result of their pains is to be seen in garlands of flowers and ingenious figure-pieces stitched in wool or silk on lengthy old velvet-covered sofas, curiously contrived screens, and on old-fashioned chairs, stools, and *prie-dieux*.

Mr. John MacCarthy, eldest son of the poet, Denis Florence MacCarthy, writes—

"I well remember the occasion on which, when very young, I first saw Mrs. Gilbert, and the favourable impression she made on me. Both in manner and goodness of heart her daughters resembled her. Eleanor was a lifelong invalid, nursed with the greatest devotion by her sisters. Of the other two Philippa was much the more delicate, and therefore the management of the house and the correspondence chiefly devolved on her sister Mary. Both were amiable and accomplished, and Mary had the brightest and sunniest of temperaments, ever on the watch to do a kindness, and to cheer any one whom she thought lonely or neglected."

The influence of the women of his family on Gilbert's character and life was strong and felicitous. In those days men had sisters indeed, and home was a sanctuary. One may ask whether the lady doctor or even the sweet girl graduate of this moment exercises over the man who has grown with her at the same mother's knee, as potent and benignant a charm as that which brightened John Gilbert's years of struggle and extraordinary labour.

The joyful sojourns at Brannickstown were brought to a tragic end by the burning to the ground of the beloved old homestead. Eleanor, Gilbert's eldest sister, and a venerable grand-aunt, Miss Griffin, were rescued with difficulty from the flames. The girl never recovered from the effects of the shock, and remained an invalid for life. The sad fate of this sister, some of whose poetic writings are preserved, was a lasting sorrow to her brother, as to the rest of the family. The tragedy seems to draw a line between his very early youth and the years of his life's work, a work to which, at the age of seventeen, he had already buckled himself. By the fire at Brannickstown many valued possessions were destroyed, and the ruin of the house being complete, the once-loved neighbourhood was shunned by the Gilberts, and the property was sold. About the same time Mrs. Gilbert removed to Villa Nova, near Blackrock, in the county of Dublin, an old-fashioned dwelling in its own enclosure of great old trees, lawn, meadow, and stream, and to this sweet and peaceful

retreat the youth, who was even then a collector of rare books relating to history, chiefly in connection with Ireland, brought his library, and here among the song-birds in which he delighted, and in friendship with the squirrels that haunted the ancient walnut trees near his windows, he set up his desk; at which he was to labour in this spot for a period of fifty years.

## CHAPTER II

1848-1850

Choice of a career—Early book-collecting—Secretary to the Celtic Society—Letters.

ON leaving Prior Park College, Gilbert would have entered the University of Dublin had not insurmountable barriers been in the way. At that period Irish Catholic parents, jealous guardians of the dearly bought and hardly preserved faith of their children, cherished even more than the present dread of the spirit of Trinity College, and Mrs. Gilbert, who had resisted the desire of her husband to give the boy to the Church approved by law and smiled on by fortune, was now quite as resolved to prevent his taking a step which, in her opinion, would have been spiritually disastrous. Her son complied with her wishes, pursuing his chosen studies outside the walls of the University, and in like manner he restrained his desire to give himself solely to ideal aims, again yielding to the mother who had destined him to assist his brother in the management of their late father's business ; with the result that, as a youth of seventeen, he was already putting forth all his extraordinary energies and exercising his characteristic resolution in carrying on two completely different kinds of work, occupying certain hours in his brother's office in correspondence with Dorr of Malaga, Violett of Bordeaux, Yglesias in London, and other firms, while all the rest of his time was devoted to reading and historical research.

In December, 1848, Mr. William Joseph Kane wrote to his brother Henry—

“ I went to the Library of the Dublin Society and entered

your brother's name. He has nothing to do but go there to-morrow, or any other day, and introduce himself to Mr. Paton, the Librarian, after which he can go when it will suit his convenience."

About the same time he made the acquaintance, in another library, of Denis Florence MacCarthy, who was about twelve years older than Gilbert, and was already publishing poetry while the latter was at school.

Mr. John MacCarthy, himself a man of much learning, writes—

"A favourite haunt of both Mr. Gilbert and my father in the early days of their acquaintance was Archbishop Marsh's library, where, amid its many quaint and curious volumes, the future historian of Dublin and of the Viceroys acquired those tastes and laid the foundation of that erudition of which he afterwards made such noble use."

The taste, however, or the genius, had been born with Gilbert, for he has himself told how, as a small schoolboy, on his way to school, he would pause, studying the faces of the houses and streets, and asking himself who had built them, and what kind of life went on behind their walls in olden times? "I wanted," he said, "to know something of the city I lived in." Even before he had left college he had begun his researches on that keenly interesting subject, entering his notes in his exquisitely neat note-books. At this time he had already made a catalogue in his own writing of his very considerable private library, in itself an interesting document. A correspondent (John Savage) writing from Lisbon in 1848, informs him, "'*Historiæ Catholicæ Iberniæ Compendium A.D. Philippo O'Sullevano Bearro:*' this is the only work on the list that can be obtained. I know of the existence of but one copy in Lisbon, and that is in the hands of a private individual, who will not sell it for less than a moidore." The moidore was found by the youth, for Gilbert offered this copy of the book to the Rev. Dr. Matthew Kelly, to be sacrificed for the production of a new edition, an offer which was, however, generously refused.

The following letter from the same correspondent in Portugal, at a time when Ireland was in the throes of famine, shows that Gilbert, with all his enthusiasm for the past, was keenly alive to the suffering humanity around him, and is also suggestive of the interest felt in affairs at home by the Irish abroad :—

“Lisbon, March 20, 1848.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“I was about to answer your very kind note of the 25th ult. when yours of the 15th inst. was handed to me. I have received the two Dublin papers. We receive regularly the *Nation*, and occasionally other Irish papers, and I have a joint subscription twixt two friends to a London paper, so that I am regularly supplied with both English and Irish news. At the same time I cannot avoid returning you thanks for your kind offer to send me any Dublin papers that I should wish for. The state of our poor country at the present moment is most lamentable, and your city must have been in a most excited state previous to the 17th inst. I am aware that the intended meeting had been postponed, and perhaps thereby disturbances were obviated. May God save our country from civil war. I have witnessed enough of its results in this country without any amelioration or prospect thereof for Portugal, and I hope that the British Parliament will see the necessity of doing something substantial for Ireland and her starving people.

“I shall be most happy to obtain for you any other of the books contained in the list, if I should find them, and you may rest assured that I shall not neglect your commission on that head. As to the manuscripts of Philip O’Sullivan, there is not a vestige of any in Lisbon, nor is there any portrait, as far as I have been able to learn, nor is anything known of his descendants, if any existed in this country. If I should hear anything interesting on these points, I shall feel great pleasure in communicating it to you, and remain, with great thanks,

“Yours faithfully,

“JOHN SAVAGE.”

In the same year (1848), when only nineteen, he was already a member of the Council of the Celtic Society, which was afterwards amalgamated with another association under the name of the Irish Archæological and Celtic Society—a pioneer band of earnest and disinterested men, who did the big work which has provided valuable materials for the Irish literary revivalists of to-day.

The following is the list of the officers of the Celtic Society for the year 1848 :—

*President.*

The Very Rev. Laurence F. O'Renehan, D.D., President, Royal College of St. Patrick, Maynooth.

*Vice-Presidents.*

The Very Rev. Richard Butler, D.D., Dean of Clonmacnoise.	Sir Robert Kane, M.R.I.A., Presi- dent, Queen's College, Cork.
Isaac Butt, Esq., LL.D.	Wm. Monsell, Esq., M.P., M.R.I.A.
The Very Rev. Edward Gustavus Hudson, Dean of Armagh.	William Smith O'Brien, Esq., M.P., M.R.I.A.
The Very Rev. Walter Meyler, D.D.	Sir Colman O'Loghlen, Bart.

*Trustees.*

Henry Hudson, Esq., M.D., M.R.I.A.  
Thomas Hutton, Esq., M.R.I.A.  
Walter Sweetman, Esq., M.R.I.A.

*Treasurer.*

John Edward Pigot,<sup>1</sup> Esq.

*Secretaries.*

Samuel H. Bindon, Esq.  
Patrick Robert Webb, Esq.

<sup>1</sup> Son of Chief Baron Pigot ; barrister-at-law, an ardent sympathizer with the Irish political movement of 1848, and until the end of his life devoted to the advancement of literature and general culture in Ireland.

*Council.*

- The Rev. George Crolly, D.D., Professor, Royal College of St. Patrick, Maynooth.  
 Charles Gavan Duffy, Esq.  
 Samuel Ferguson, Esq., M.R.I.A.  
 Patrick Vincent Fitzpatrick, Esq.  
 John T. Gilbert, Esq.  
 The Rev. Charles Graves, A.M., Professor, and F.T.C.D., M.R.I.A.  
 The Rev. James Graves, Kilkenny.  
 James Hardiman, Esq., M.R.I.A.  
 William Elliott Hudson, Esq., A.M., M.R.I.A.  
 The Rev. Matthew Kelly, Professor, Royal College of St. Patrick, Maynooth.  
 Michael Felix MacCarthy, Esq.  
 Charles P. MacDonnell, Esq., M.R.I.A.  
 John Mitchel, Esq.  
 The Very Rev. Edward Nowlan, V.G. Ossory, P.P. Gowran.  
 Isaac Stoney O'Callaghan, Esq.  
 Thomas O'Hagan, Esq.  
 The Rev. William Reeves, M.B.  
 The Rev. Charles W. Russell, D.D., Professor, Royal College of St. Patrick, Maynooth.  
 John George Smyly, Esq.  
 Edward King Tenison, Esq., M.P., M.R.I.A.  
 Robert James Tennant, Esq., M.P.  
 Robert Tighe, Esq., M.R.I.A.  
 William R. Wilde, Esq., M.R.I.A.

*Assistant Secretary.*

Mr. John Daly.

In 1849 Gilbert succeeded S. H. Bindon as secretary to the Celtic Society, in conjunction with P. R. Webb. On the paper, signed "John Edward Pigot, Treasurer," which gives a receipt for Gilbert's subscription as a life member [£10], a few words of information are printed:—

"The main object of this (Celtic) Society is to publish original documents illustrative of the history, literature, and antiquities of Ireland, edited with introductory essays, English translations, and notes."



Much correspondence remains to show the energetic and disinterested spirit, as well as the anxieties and difficulties, of the men who had most at heart the welfare of the society.

*From Rev. Dr. Matthew Kelly.*

“Maynooth College, April 6, 1849.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“Your kind and liberal subscription to Stephen White<sup>1</sup> is a good omen. With a little prudence and perseverance, the materials for Irish history may soon become accessible.

“I was anxious to speak to you on some plan of organizing our society, that is, for getting in subscriptions; mere circulars will not do, I fear. The times are so bad that some gentle pressure is required. What if some person volunteered, or were appointed to try his chance, first in the Dublin Corporation? He could say we have the four archbishops and many of the bishops, and we have a council such as I verily believe never before existed for any Irish project. Come, then, give us your help! If we succeeded in Dublin, the argument becomes stronger for Cork, where I could command the services of two or three devoted friends, and also Belfast. I should then appoint a trusty agent in London to apply to the Irish members of Parliament, so as to have an imposing list of subscribers to be published with the next volume. A great effort might be made to clear off the expenses of the society, and buy our printing and paper at first cost. I think it is bad economy not to send copies to be reviewed by the press.”

*From the Same.*

“College, Maynooth, February 7, 1850.

“I thank you for your suggestion about the Latin series. Lombard makes only 170 pages of the Apologia, the other 120 will consist of manuscripts. Lombard was first in the field, as

<sup>1</sup> “Apologia pro Hibernia,” Dublin, 1849.

he wrote in 1601, and, meagre though he be, he gives many facts not found elsewhere. Now, may I request that if you know any short pieces on the reigns of Elizabeth and James in the Dublin Society, or elsewhere, you will be good enough to inform me. Where, in what office, in whose custody, are the records of the Star Chamber preserved, and how shall they be procured? They contain an odd history of Irish corporations during at least twenty-two years. Be it known to any person who aids me that I publish, without note or comment, nothing but material, a task which would have been now done, if I had not the misfortune of dabbling with a Celtic Society."

A few days later the same correspondent writes—

"The 'immediate publication of O'Sullivan with translations, etc.,' is probably the old story of more than four years' standing. An edition of both text and translation will hardly pay for some years to come, though an edition of either, separately, certainly would, in some hands. I do not intend to commence the edition of the text before September, probably. As I have no copy but that in our library, I must get it copied, if I cannot find a cheap copy in some bookseller's hands. Perhaps you know how a copy can be got? Some warm friends of the series earnestly recommend O'Sullivan as the next book. Indeed, if I had a copy, I think I would put it in the printer's hands in the middle of next week."

The book alluded to was published in the year 1850.

*From Rev. Dr. O'Renehan.*

"College, Maynooth, January 7, 1850.

"It was not the snow alone that prevented me from seeing you on Saturday last. I was attending to the grave the remains of a priest, my intimate friend for twenty-five years. I could have wished to be present at the announcement of Mr. Hudson's generosity. I also wished to see you,

and to ask you, as I now do, to come here by the 11 o'clock train, and dine with me at 4 o'clock, on next Wednesday.

"Our general examinations of the students are proceeding, and, much as I wish to speak to you about the Celtic Society, these leave me at this moment scarcely time enough to ask the favour of an answer."

*From the Same.*

"Maynooth, February 7, 1850.

"Before our next meeting Mr. Daly, I think, ought to have final answers with regard to the Dublin arrears. Proposals for binding, specimens of Goodwin's Irish and English types for our particular work, his proposed charge for corrections and alterations, and for notes, if they should exceed the proportions of the 'Book of Rights,' should all be laid on the table as soon as the chair is taken, together with a draft of resolution embodying all the particulars and specifications of Goodwin's proposal in all its parts. This will help to expedition, and guard against apprehensions which our past history might perhaps suggest to some of the members. The manuscript of our next volume, the Irish and the English, and notes, and all the parts thereof, if at all possible, should be laid on the table, together with the printer's estimate of the number of sheets which each part of it will require, and as *close* a statement as can be of the amount of alterations which may be introduced. If Mr. O'Donovan would consent to make this statement to the Council verbally, or in writing, it would, I doubt not, afford them peculiar satisfaction, more especially as some of them may, perhaps, be as little acquainted as myself with the general tenor of the manuscript, or of what editorial labour Dockwra may require, or what other miscellaneous letters or papers are about to be published.

"You lately cheered my hopes about our future success by telling me that our past liabilities would be effaced on the security of our stock. But I have not since heard a word

about it. If ever done, it should be done at once, before our next volume will be, necessarily, so curtailed as not to give satisfaction. I even regret part of our work last Tuesday, because I fear it will result in determining some members against publishing at all."

The following letters to Gilbert from two zealous workers of the Celtic Society are interesting as reflecting some of the feeling of Irishmen at a gloomy moment of their country's history:—

*From S. H. Bindon.*

"3, Queen Street, Limerick, August 20, 1848.

"I am very much obliged by your sending me the papers. Indeed, you judged right when you supposed me full of deep anxiety about the poor fellows who are now being martyred by their zeal for Ireland. I hope they may escape with some measure of safety from the deep treachery under which they have suffered. Webb and I have spent this day doing the Old Mortality among the tombs of Limerick. I myself have been very busy with some literary projects, but though I go on working, yet my heart is faint; you will say *no wonder*.

"I see all Duffy's things advertised. I suppose 'O'Donovan's Annals' will be sold cheaply. Will you oblige me by extracting the note upon 'Porteroise,' 1506, A.D.—I mean about building O'Brien's Bridge—and send it to me? I merely want the entry about the Bridge, and the note upon the same. I want it in reference to a suit in which I am one of the counsel.

"I am accumulating facts as rapidly as I can. I am trying to do something with this town. I send you some of my labours as an organizer. Remember me to Daly. I bought a SPANISH grammar."

*From the Same.*

“I regard your discovery of Preston’s portrait as a very precious find. I searched far and near for something pictorial about him, as I was the first to call attention to the Siege of Louvain, of which he was the hero. I think, if we can get over the winter, we shall be able to get on with the Celtic Society, but we have no business ‘questing’ among the members who have paid until we have a book to hand them again; we must only make a sort of calendar of our own, and occasionally knock two years into one.

“I hope the times will speedily mend, for they can’t be worse; every landlord in the county of Clare insolvent except four. We are paying from 12s. to 17s. 8d. in the pound, poor-rate. The ‘pisantry’ have now the fee-simple of Ireland, and, as usual, a fine ‘loyal national’ confiscation is proceeding.

“I am very happy to see that Irish professors are attached to the Queen’s Colleges. I never expected more than the revival of an Irish literary nationality, and I am persuaded, if the *Nation* men had stuck to that, that they would have effected positive and substantial good, and possibly would have made the country something like Scotland. If we all live and do well, I trust we shall see those colleges effect good for this country, although, I grant you, the patient is *in extremis*.

“Will you tell Daly to let me know if he can get a second-hand MacCullagh’s ‘Use and Study of History,’ and if so, send it to me, per railroad, on Saturday, as I want it for public Celtic purposes on Tuesday night. The second edition is what I wish for. Of course I will send him the price the moment I hear from him, as I know the poor man can’t advance—who can, nowadays?

“I owe Webb a letter, but I have been so busy. I hope you will write again and let me know some bibliographical news.”

*From the Same.*

“Your letter has just come to hand. I don’t care now about MacCullagh. I got Dr. Wiseman’s Lectures, and they answered my purpose better.

“Will you put me in the way of getting a copy of this catalogue, by sale or otherwise? I want not alone to read, but to spell it. I think some of what you speak about very valuable; for instance, Lynch’s ‘Alithinologia.’ It could not be edited in Ireland hitherto, as no copy was here. I wish very much T.C.D. would buy it. It was generally thought unique, the only copy being in the Grenville Collection.

“Then the ‘Cavilli Speculum.’ I think I know all about the author, but nothing of the book; and you also mention some other books which I don’t remember anything about.

“There was a magnificent silver pin found near here. I purchased it, and transferred my purchase at par to the Museum for the Limerick Society, not being monied enough to hold anything in precious metal but coin-current. Clibborn wrote me a rubbing up for not sending it to the Academy, but I told him that the Limerick reliques should remain in Limerick while we have a museum, and if not, let them by all means go to the Academy. He disputes this position, but I still won’t give up. Like a good fellow, try and make me out a copy of the catalogue, by sale or otherwise, and put it in the railroad parcel office for me. It will feed me for one month. I hope you will not lose sight of Preston’s phiz.”

*From P. Robert Webb.*

“At Bindon’s, December 22, 1848.

“I have just read your note to Bindon, in which you are good enough to remember me. I was thinking just before of writing you a few lines descriptive of my pursuits here, which have been such as you conjecture, and I have several times wished for your company, as I don’t forget the effective aid

you rendered me at St. Audoen's. We have been taking rubbings in the cathedral here, some of which I hope to show you, and among them one of the Galwey monument, older than, or as old, as that of Portlester. There are many shields, containing arms of much interest, scattered throughout the old building. The more I see, the more I am convinced there is much to be preserved in many localities that has never yet been closely enough examined. I fear, however, you are quite right about the prospects of our Irish literature for some time to come. I only wish we could predict the termination of this period of prostration, but there seems no reason to anticipate any brightening in our gloomy horizon, I fear much. I have been on a visit at poor O'Brien's place in this county, Cahirmoyle, last week. 'Twas a melancholy thing enough to see his books, his reading-room, etc., and reflect that the owner will never see them more."

## CHAPTER III

1849-1853

Trip to England—Work in the Celtic Society—*Irish Quarterly Review*—Royal Irish Academy—The Mystics—Irish music—Letters.

IN 1849 the young Irishman of twenty years went on a trip to England to see the country of his father's people, spending six weeks in Devonshire, paying a visit to Prior Park College, and going on to Oxford and London. Of this trip there remains an itinerary, kept in what some one described as his delicate Italian handwriting, headed "Ephemeris," of which the following is a *résumé* :—

Crossing from Dublin to Falmouth, "start in mail coach for Plymouth, pass through Bodmin and St. Anstell's, cross the water at Jerpoint, through Devonport; arrive in Plymouth, call on Mrs. Molesworth on the Royal William Yard. By rail to Torquay. Paignton. Torre Abbey.

"October 22.—To Torquay, and by rail to Exeter. Cathedral. Leave for Tiverton, where meet J. Ryan; proceed together to Tiverton, St. John's, Mr. Fanning's, where sleep. Visit the town of Tiverton with Rev. J. Fanning. Visit the neighbourhood. To Exeter with Revs. J. Fanning and Power; dine at Rev. Dr. Oliver's. Arrive at Taunton, visit the church; start by coach for Beauminster; visit Netherbury, Farnham, Daniel's, Knott. Explore surrounding country. Pilsden Hill. November.—Milplash; Acborough at Surgeon Daniel's. Ride to Bridport, 6 miles.

"November 5.—By coach to Taunton, by rail to Bath. The Abbey. To Prior Park; see L. Guibara, J. Bonomè, J. Kavanagh, J. Illingworth. To Midford Castle with Rev. C.



Parfitt, where dine with Mr. and Mrs. Conolly ; back to Bath at 11 o'clock p.m. 7th.—Visit Pump Room and Assembly Rooms ; leave at 11 ; by rail to Cheltenham. Visit Pettrille, Old Wells, Lord Northwick's Picture Gallery at Thurlestone House. Arrive at Oxford ; visit the College, Botanic Gardens, Ashmolean Museum, Dr. Buckland's Geological Collection in the Clarendon, Sheldonian Theatre, Bodleian Library, Examinations. Arrive in London.

"November 10.—London. India House Museum, Post Office, Royal Exchange, Bank of England, Mansion House, St. Paul's, Temple, Trafalgar Square, St. James's Park, King's College, Somerset House, Downing Street, Hyde Park, Sadler's Wells. Sunday.—Moorfield's Chapel, High Mass. By rail to Hampton Court. 12th, Monday.—Tower, Thames Tunnel, Greenwich, Adelphi Theatre. 13th (wet).—Windsor Castle, Drury Lane Theatre, Madame Tussaud's Wax Works. 14th.—Fenchurch Street, W. Fox, Nicholas Lane, J. Scott, Lloyd's, National Gallery, Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park, Coliseum, Westminster Hall and Abbey, New and Old Houses of Commons, Haymarket Theatre, Phelps in 'King Lear.' 15th.—Day of Public Thanksgiving, St. George's Cathedral ; Lambeth Palace, Chelsea Hospital, Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's. 16th.—London Docks and Vaults, Fenchurch Street, Crypts of St. Paul's, British Museum, Polytechnic. 17th, Saturday.—Euston to Dublin."

With this trip the following letters from Rev. C. Parfitt, his former master in Classics at Prior Park College, are connected :—

"Midford Castle,

"Festival of St. Augustine, 1849.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"You must have thought me very ungrateful in having allowed your very kind letter to have remained so long unanswered, but the fact is that it reached me on Good Friday, and the week after we left here for Weston's, and have only just returned. I was anxious to thank you for your

valued present, and the kind sentiments you express in my regard, but, having left your letter here, could not remember your address. The numbers of the *Nation* newspaper which you kindly sent me I should have acknowledged the receipt of but for the same reason. I had not your address, and could not get it till Hugh O'Connor sent it to me.

“I have witnessed with much pleasure the efforts that are being made in Ireland to cultivate a national literature. They cannot but be productive of great good, as they must tend in a great degree to foster a national and independent spirit.

“The Queen's visit to the Emerald Isle will, I trust, be beneficial, though you want from her Majesty something more than kind words. If she be a mortal, and I certainly am of opinion that kings and queens are nothing more, she could not but have been highly delighted with the warm-hearted reception she met with. It is my opinion that the Irish members do not sufficiently speak out in Parliament. There seems to be among them a timidity in combating the prejudices of men in power. What a crying sin it is that that overgrown, worthless Church Establishment should be allowed any longer to increase its obesity, whilst so many thousands are perishing from want. Why is not the old dame (or, as Waterton calls her, though, I think, rather coarsely, old Mother d——nable), rickety as she is, helped on with a push?

“You doubtless have heard of the pecuniary difficulties into which Prior Park has fallen. It is still struggling on, and lately we have all been making a strenuous effort to ease some of the more pressing burdens. We want in England the Irish spirit for religion; our thoughts appear to turn first on money, and the comforts that money brings. How noble the spirit displayed by the Irish Catholics in the subscription raised for the Pope! I'm told His Holiness is a warm admirer of Dr. MacHale—how nobly *he* has stood out for the liberty of Irish education!

"I left Prior Park for my present situation in September, '46, at the time Dr. Ullathorne quitted the Western for the Central District. Should you be passing this way, I shall always be happy to see you, and, should fortune favour me, so far as to allow me to visit the sister isle, I shall not fail to give you a call. In the mean time, if you should meet any of my quondam college friends, pray present them my kind remembrances, and accept, my dear sir, the warm thanks and sincere regards of

"Yours very faithfully in J.C.,  
"C. PARFITT."

After Gilbert's return from England, Father Parfitt wrote to him again—

"Midford Castle, December 1, 1849.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I should have acknowledged the receipt of your welcome little souvenir earlier, but was anxious to look it through before replying to your note. Accept my many thanks. It pleased me much, and reminded me constantly of the translations of the Oriental Society, some works of which Bishop Wiseman lent me some years ago. Those songs also are sufficient to show the wide difference in the characteristics of the English and Irish nations, and those who are labouring for a revival of the literature of their country are doing her a much greater service than such as are eternally at politics. You do not tell me what you thought of the Bodleian. I hope you were pleased. The next time you come this way I hope you will give us notice of your approach; then we shall be prepared to receive you, and you must not fly off so soon. The Conollys regretted your stay was so short, and Mrs. Conolly was much pleased, and thought you an honour to Prior Park. But I must not flatter your vanity, if you have any. As to Chartism, it is an abomination, and, I regret to say, is making rapid strides in this unhappy country. The *Rambler*, in one of its late numbers, discloses scenes witnessed in London which are enough to make the hair stand on end.

The priests here do not meddle in politics, and find enough to do in our endeavours to counteract the evil-doing under the garb of religion. There is something just now pending which may be of incalculable advantage to Prior Park. As soon as anything is decided I shall let you know. With regard to the Queen's Colleges, I am more adverse to them than ever from having seen the inaugural address of Sir Robert Kane. Education, according to my idea of the term, does not so much mean the mere exercise of the intellect, or filling it with knowledge, as a formation of character, by instilling fixed and sound principles to guide a man through life. Now, I cannot see how these can be inculcated, unless founded on precise and clear notions of religion. They may send out learned men, but will they make good men? Begging that you will not forget me in your prayers, I assure you that a letter from you will be always welcome

"To your sincere and affectionate friend,

"C. PARFITT."

In 1851 Gilbert became closely connected with the *Irish Quarterly Review* at its start, and in its pages had begun to publish articles on the "Celtic Literature of Ireland." He opened his article on the Celtic Records by the assertion that "the history of Great Britain must remain incomplete and defective until the ancient literary monuments of the kingdom of Ireland, which now forms an integral portion of the British Empire, have been fully investigated ;" and he complains of the misrepresentations of writers who have compiled "Histories of Ireland," and, to conceal their ignorance, have declared that "no native materials were in existence." In connection with these articles, John Cornelius O'Callaghan, author of the "Green Book" and the "History of the Irish Brigades," wrote to him—

"I think, in concluding, you might make a reflection which would be very suitable to the medium or respectable principles of the *Review*, to this effect: that you were thus particular in giving an account of the several valuable

contributions to the history of this country which, through an expenditure of so much money, or between three and four thousand pounds, as well as so much labour and research, have been published since 1841, and yet, by neither of the two periodicals purporting to be connected with the nation in its opposite extremes of ultra-Protestant and ultra-Catholic, namely, the *Dublin University Magazine* and the *Dublin Review*, were thought worthy of that notice to which, if only as such creditable productions of the Dublin press, all were entitled! If this silence proceeded from an incapacity to review publications on the history of the country, what is to be thought of the ability of such 'best possible instructors' in an ironical sense? If it were owing to an indifference, or want of interest on the subject, what claim have such periodicals to put themselves forward as associated with Ireland more than with any other country? I only throw out this suggestion to you."

O'Callaghan, noted for his whimsical similes and fierce invective against the "villains" who neglected their country and cherished "a flimsy cosmopolitanism that could write in Ireland *de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*, with the exception of Ireland," concludes his letter by advising the author of the Celtic articles to "terminate, like a bee or wasp, in some sort of sting;" a counsel which Gilbert would laugh at for its humour, while pursuing his own method of advancing truth by calm determination of purpose. The articles were hailed with delight by the Irish learned societies. "The *Irish Quarterly*," writes the Rev. James Graves, "seems to have set out with the determination to do justice to Irish historical literature. I have read the articles on the Celtic volumes. I shall look forward to the forthcoming article on the Archæological Society's books. I am glad you are going to eschew politics for the greater part."

At this time, while yet only from twenty to twenty-three years of age, Gilbert occupied a remarkable position among his learned elders, who appealed to him for information on points of history or antiquarian matters. "Your extensive

knowledge of Dublin men and things," writes Dean Graves,<sup>1</sup> "would, I dare say, enable you to answer the questions put in the accompanying letter. They puzzle me. Excuse my troubling you in this matter."

"Are the lists of King James's army in D'Alton's book to be depended on?" asks Lord Dunraven, writing from Adare Manor. "I find in Lord Clare's regiment of horse my ancestor's name, Thady Quin; but I have documents, signed by judges and magistrates, all declaring him to be quiet and well-disposed, and stating distinctly that he did not serve in King James's army. He was under suspicion, hence the necessity of these documents of exculpation, but he appears to have come out with flying colours."

Holding this position, in January, 1852, Gilbert, Secretary to the Celtic Society, closely connected with the editorship of the *Irish Quarterly Review*, author of the articles in that review on the Streets of Dublin, the Celtic Records, and Irish Historic Literature, which had attracted the notice of many thoughtful minds in the kingdom, known in intellectual circles as a young man of ability and learning far beyond his twenty-three years, sought election as Member of the Royal Irish Academy, but without success. On April 2, 1852, Mr. Edward Clibborn, Acting Secretary of the Royal Irish Academy, wrote to him—

"Your election will come off with flying colours on the 12th of April next. You might look to your proposal paper, and say, 'Shall it go to the Academy with so many names to it?' Four is the number required, but yours has eight. This will get you some black beans from those who can't muster more than the required number (4), so that you may have to cry out, 'Save me from my friends.'"

On the fly-leaf of this letter there is a note in Gilbert's writing—

"Names of Proposers: John O'Donovan, LL.D.; George Petrie, LL.D.; Charles Graves, F.T.C.D.; Sir Robert Kane;

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Charles Graves, D.D., Trinity College, Dublin; afterwards Bishop of Limerick.

Rev. W. H. Drummond ; Samuel Ferguson ; W. E. Hudson ; John E. Pigot.

“N.B.—All these were voluntary signatures, none of them having been solicited.

“Blackbeaned on the 12th of April, 1852, the Secretary of the Celtic Society being the first individual rejected in the Academy’s new house in Dawson Street.”

It was understood by Gilbert and his friends that a strenuous effort had been made by a certain element in the Academy to compass his rejection. On April 27 Mr. Clibborn wrote again—

“I have no doubt that the result in your case arose out of a misconception as to the identity of the party proposed, or by the neglect of your proposers, in either not attending the meeting or not asking people to vote for you. Your friends have declined to put you up again. I think them quite wrong, but such is their opinion, and they must now act on it, as the time for proposing was allowed to pass on Monday night last. You would not ask Haliday, to be sure, but he expressed his opinion of your merits, and his obligation to you, and his opinion that you were a person to more honour the Academy than the Academy was to honour you, if you were its member—and who will deny this opinion ?

“Your case lies at the door of your proposers, and not with the Council of the Academy. No doubt you got several black beans for the reason I mentioned to you, but on your own demerits or merits I hope you got very few. Eight of your friends proposed you, and when the ballot arrived six of them were absent, and the two who were present made insufficient efforts to get you elected! This is the grave fact.”

Despite the friendly tone of the above, no doubt sincere, letter, it was known to Gilbert’s adherents that the black beans which kept his brilliant talents outside of this intellectual centre of Dublin were due to a spirit of sectarian prejudice, which it is to be hoped has lost some of its force during the passing of the last fifty years. He made no

second attempt at that period, and it was not until the year 1855 that he was, as he said later, when recalling these experiences, forced into the Academy by his true and unswerving friend, Dr. (afterwards Sir William) Wilde.

To the young man on fire with enthusiasm, conscious of peculiar ability, and gifted with an enormous power of work, the disappointment was a stinging one. He did not, however, allow it to hurt him beyond the moment, and continued to push on his many arduous undertakings in literature and research, at the same time extending the circle of his friends on intellectual and social lines in this country, in England, and in bibliographical and archæological centres on the Continent. His acquaintance with languages—ancient, middle, and modern—and his skill in palæography, acquired, not in any training school, but by his own individual effort and industry, enabled him to pursue his researches, unhindered by technical difficulties; and his extraordinarily keen eyesight, which never failed him in the slightest degree till the end of his life, was a ready aid in the deciphering of writings of past times, even to many trained eyes undecipherable.

With all his serious tastes and weighty accomplishments, Gilbert, at twenty-four, was no ponderous young man carrying an "old head on young shoulders." With his large, well-developed figure, moving with an easy swinging step, his dome-like forehead and strong, level brows, he looked older than his years, until a sudden fling of boyish gaiety undeceived the observer. He would say, with a laugh, that he wore a hat of the same size as Dan O'Connell's; but Gilbert was six feet high, and of a finer build than the Liberator. Clothed with warm, brown locks, it was a leonine head; and his mild yet penetrating blue eyes usually shone with genial fun when not concentrating their forces on the consideration of some abstruse matter. Personally, "J. T.," as he was called, was the delight of his friends, brimming with good humour, ever willing to leave his book at their summons, with keen readiness for enjoyable companionship. He was gifted with that



easy courtesy of manner which is so great a sweetener of social intercourse, and which, in his case, accorded well with pursuits leading him into courtly company, not only of the living present, but through the dust of the past. Two letters written by him in this year show him in his serious and in his merry mood. Concerning some matter connected with the Celtic Society, a misunderstanding had arisen between him and Dr. R. R. Madden, author of "The Lives of the United Irishmen," and very many years the senior of Gilbert, occasioning the following correspondence. The younger man wrote—

"As it will be exceedingly awkward and prejudicial to the affairs of the Society to have on its deputation two members who from ill-feeling have not even spoken to each other for a considerable period, I write to propose that we should, for a time at least, agree to forget our private differences. In alluding to an ill-feeling between us, I wish you to understand that I am totally unconscious of having acted in a manner calculated either to injure or annoy you, and am prepared to explain fully any portion of my conduct which you may have considered offensive to you.

"Should you not agree with my proposal, it will, perhaps, be more judicious for either or both of us to withdraw from this deputation rather than allow any private differences to interfere with the interests of the Society which we represent."

To this letter Dr. R. R. Madden replied—

"Let me assure you, I feel entirely satisfied with the explanation you have given me, and I feel a little *unsatisfied* with myself, that my rather extensive dealings (for my sins), with booksellers and publishers do not furnish me with more experience than to allow me on the occasion in question to imagine the fault was not the publisher's which placed two gentlemen, who were of the author genus and friendly, in a wrong position towards each other. But as far as you and I are concerned in the affair, your note removes every trace of an impression that caused an estrangement which I always regretted, and now blame myself for having allowed to take

place. Be it as you say about my continuance on the Council and as you wish that in literature at least we should show the propriety of there being 'A Society of United Irishmen,' so be it; and, in the words of Cassius, let me add—

“ ‘Never come such division 'tween our souls!’ ”

The appropriate rejoinder I feel I may supply from you: ‘Everything is well!’ ”

The little misunderstanding hinted at was the beginning of a lifelong friendship. The second letter is addressed to Dr. Lyons, a young man only six years the senior of Gilbert, who had already distinguished himself as a physician, and was afterwards noted for his devotion to medical science in the Crimea after the war. Dr. Lyons, like Gilbert, was interested in the Society for the Preservation and Better Knowledge of Irish Music.

“ August 4, 1853.

“ DEAR LYONS,


“ I am glad to find you looking so ## after the members, and enclose a cheque. We may now consider our music fixed on a trebly firm base, and I hope the public may not find it hard to understand in its Petrie-fied state, altho’—why should we discredit the fable of music moving stones when we know that our Irish composers have made so many *Πλαίγιε γυνήε* which some declare to be the original *Fig-or-nought*, thus attempting to confirm the *idol* theory of those who try to prove that the Irish were originally Indians, while any one who passes along our country roads can see how much more probable is the Cart-a-genian theory which Vallancey drove at when he gave the reins to his imagination. Others, indeed, give us Spain by asserting that our melodies have a decidedly Moore-ish tinge, and declare that altho’ we have no national flag, they have seen several pieces of green Bunting very highly exalted.

“ But isn’t it useless to continue thus harping on, stringing words together merely to make them *instrumental* to our purposes, so different from the ingenuousness of the old Irish

who hated falsehood so much that they were always striking the lyres, and were content to live on so little that they were never happier than when enjoying their  $\Sigma\mu\mu\tau$  in peace?

"I hope Dr. Petrie will not omit to notice that the Æolian harp originated in this country, as it can be clearly proved that all the instruments of music in Ireland were played by the *Gaels*: pray keep this private, otherwise it will be scattered to the winds and blown upon!

"I hope that the society may continue 'crescendo,' and that your applications for subscriptions may be answered so 'allegrement' that you will be able to assume a 'maestoso' position; and surely you can never become 'diminuendo' so long as the funds are well 'led.' And that you may thus have reason to remain 'vivace' (?) 'con spirito' is, I am sure the desire of 'tutti.'

"Excuse me for trespassing so long on yours, which, I am sure, is no , and, believe me, without  $\text{h}\tau$ ery or variations, yours, 'al fine,'

"J. T. GILBERT."

At this time punning and playing with words was a favourite form of wit, and when in frolicsome humour, "J. T." would pour forth such *jeux de mots* with laughable rapidity, often in competition with Denis Florence MacCarthy, to the amusement of their friends. Many of their sayings on such occasions floated long about Dublin, repeated with much effect by good, genial Father Healy and other professional humourists; as, for instance, Gilbert's greeting to a certain ecclesiastic, who had escaped a railway accident without injury, "I thought you would have been a bishop *in partibus* by this time;" or MacCarthy's exclamation to a tiny girl who looked at him with eyes like forget-me-nots, "My child, you will have a blue look-out for the whole of your life;" or the poet's allusion to himself, after his hearing had become slightly impaired, as "De—f (deaf) MacCarthy, de Bard of 'Erin."

Several genial societies were inaugurated in Dublin about this period. A passage from MacCarthy's diary, March 15, 1853, records a meeting of the "Mystics" at Dalkey—

"About thirty of the Brethren attended. Waller (Dr. John Francis) in the chair; Magrath, vice; Gilbert sat next me. Wilde, Starkey, Porter, King, Corcoran, Jones the sculptor, Hayes, Darcy, Armstrong, Thornton, and many others whose names I did not catch. Waller proposed my health in his usual friendly manner. The Society may grow into one of some value, but it will require revision and care."

Of December 6 of the same year the diary notes, "Dined at John Pigot's; Gilbert, Sullivan (W.K.), and a few others, there."

Pigot, who was an intensely earnest man, looked on the Society as too frivolous for a serious worker, for he writes to Gilbert—

"Ere this they have made a 'Mystic' of you, and you have sacrificed to the Jupiter-Esculapius and Juno-Minerva [Dr. and Mrs. Wilde] of Westland Row. I wish you joy of the pleasant company you are likely to meet in your new courses, and of the pleasant anticipations of literary and historical eminence into which you are sure to rise in such company!" In the same letter, however, the mentor rather discounts his warnings to his young friend by condemning his too persistent devotion to his desk and books.

"I am very sorry you could not come up for a week [to Buncrana], and your friends here are all equally so; and, moreover, it is the unanimous opinion that your Portuguese visitors were myths, merely. Seriously, I think you do yourself great injustice by staying in Dublin all the summer. However, there is no use in talking to a mule."

Pigot dates from *loç ɾuɲɪɹɛ*, and is very scornful concerning a mistake in the grammar of Gilbert's superscription on his envelope—

"What nice spelling of the vernacular yours is! Of

course, you forgot to recognize that it contains such absurdities as declined cases and rules of grammar! *loč rujeač*, indeed!"

A year or two later Pigot makes the same reproach of overwork. When writing from Castletown Berehaven, he says—

"It would have been much better for you to have come down south, and rambled about Bantry Bay, than to have gone to Wicklow."

Pigot was a barrister, and took his "long holiday," but Gilbert's work was never done, and rarely to be parted with for periods measured by weeks rather than by days or hours. The desire for his work was a passion, and the fascination of centres connected with it held him always within easy reach of them, except when the exigencies of the work itself, or possible advantages to it, required or induced him to move unusually far abroad. The enjoyments of country ramble or after-dinner talk snatched from his multifarious engagements and undertakings were, however, enjoyed with a zest unknown to many a man who puts the girdle of his travel round the earth, and reckons the extent of his pleasure by the measure of its mileage.

## CHAPTER IV

1853-1860

History of Dublin—Letters of the period.

IN these earliest years of the fifties, Gilbert, while laying up material by the way for future works, was earnestly engaged on his serial publication of "The Streets of Dublin." The first papers attracted much attention, and letters poured in on the editor of the *Irish Quarterly Review* from all sides asking questions concerning historical details of localities, of houses in or about the city, and of the identity and circumstances of certain of their inhabitants. In many cases the anonymous author of "The Streets of Dublin" was able to satisfy his correspondents, though sometimes anxiety or curiosity demanded the impossible. The pains taken by the young author to extend his own researches, not only by the discovery of every scrap of written record of the dead, but by drawing from the source of the memories of those still living, are suggested by the great number of letters which remain relating to the work as it progressed in the *Irish Quarterly Review*. A few examples from this voluminous correspondence of fifty years ago may prove interesting to Dublin people, in the present day.

Attracted by the article on Dr. Samuel Madden, founder of the Dublin Society, Sir Frederick Madden writes from the British Museum, asking for "particulars of a John Madden, who, in 1734, resided in Bachelor's Walk." With this object Sir F. Madden is "very anxious to learn if any early assessment books or poll books exist of the city of Dublin, and, if so, where they are deposited, having been informed some

years ago such books were in Dublin Castle ; but on application to Sir George Eliot, the Secretary of State, no such documents could be found."

With reference to the noble old town mansion of the Duke of Leinster, known as Leinster House, now the centre of the Royal Dublin Society, Lord Kildare "regrets that he knows no particulars connected with the history of Leinster House worth publishing, but will be happy to make any inquiries that may be of use ;" regrets that he has not been able to discover what was the expense of building Leinster House, nor the name of the artist who gave the designs for the ceiling, etc. As to the disposition of the rooms, the present library was the "Gallery" in which were the best pictures, the next room to it the "Drawing-room ;" the long room below was called the "Ballroom," the next to it the "Dining-room." The pictures are now at Carton. Lord Kildare states that he "has a medal struck in commemoration of the memorial presented to the King by the Earl of Kildare in 1754. There are some pamphlets of that period in the Library at Carton, but no record of the Masquerades of 1778. The duke ceased to reside in Leinster House in 1815."

This correspondence was the beginning of the warm friendship and sympathy ever afterwards manifested towards Gilbert by the late Duke of Leinster, grandfather of the present youthful duke.

"There will be no difficulty in the way of your making searches in the books of the Royal Irish Academy," writes Mr. Edward Clibborn, Secretary to the Royal Irish Academy. "Whyte's Academy, No. 79, Grafton Street, will, I hope, occupy a place in the history of Grafton Street, and some notice of the men who first drove the quill there. William John Whyte, Irish law-agent, London, might be able to give you lists of the names of the pupils who lived under his grandfather's baculus. The Royal Dublin Society was located in Grafton Street, and was burned down there, I believe, next door to the Academy House. Perhaps the

houses of the Academy House, and of those above it, say the houses 113, 112, 111, 110, and 109, might explain where old Mornington House was, and was not—but I suppose you are made up on all these points.”

The following note from John P. Prendergast, author of “The Cromwellian Settlement,” is curious, read in the light of the present day. Referring to the will of Mr. Hudson, dentist (date 1822), of which Gilbert was in search of a copy, he says—

“The testator leaves £500, towards building a hollow, conical tower in the churchyard at Glenville, Co. Cork, to erect a pendulum in, to exhibit his discoveries concerning the motions of the heavenly bodies as proved in various essays written by him under the immediate inspiration of Providence. In bequeathing his canal shares he says that they will rise from £100, each to £1000, if the canal company adopt his plan of turning the Dodder, and if iron roads should be laid along the banks for the course of automaton chariots, which he expects to see running along at a velocity as yet unconceived, carrying passengers without fatigue of cattle. The family at one time feared that these ideas would raise a question of his sanity.”

Denis Florence MacCarthy writes—

“I regret that I raised your expectations of new facts with respect to Daly’s Club House, as the little I have discovered does not appear to be of importance. I may add a little to your wonderful stock of materials (on some other subject), materials which you will permit me to say you have used with singular ability and clearness, and invested with a charm which they really did not seem to possess. . . . Do you know Alderman Fleming, of the old corporation? He lives somewhere in Camden Street, at an apothecary’s, and knows more about the recent history of ‘Daly’s’ than probably any man living.”

Mr. Miot, a connoisseur of art in Dublin of the day, adds some items of information as to old Leinster House:—

“The great dining-parlour opening to the lawn is now



the conversation-room. The long room on the north side was the supper-room, where the scientific meetings are now held. The picture gallery, which contained some fine specimens of the Italian and Flemish schools, is now the library. The beautiful ceiling of the room is from designs furnished by Wyatt. The colonnade on each side of the house was erected as a screen to conceal the passage to the garden and offices. The volunteers, under the command of the Duke of Leinster, were occasionally drilled on the lawn."

As to further details of the history of Kildare Street, Mr. Miot<sup>1</sup> continues—

"The *dramatis personæ* of 'Jane Shore' is not in my copy of Samuel Whyte's poems, and I doubt if it is to be found in any copy. There is no appearance of its ever having been published in the volume, and there are other prologues and epilogues without the *dramatis personæ*. When 'Jane Shore' was acted at Lady Borrowes in 1790 the *preliminary advertisement* to the poem (p. 9) states that it was a *revival*, and the preface (p. 7) mentions that the 'bills of the *dramatis personæ* were taken from the public prints and critiques of the day,' so that perhaps it may be in some of the newspapers of the time, March, 1790."

Pursuing the search into the identity of the play-acting personages of Dublin society, Gilbert received the following from Sir Erasmus Dixon Borrowes, Bart. :—

"In reference to your note inquiring about the private theatricals said to have been performed at Lady Borrowes' house in Kildare Street, and some notice of Sir Robert Dixon, who lived in Skinner's Row in the time of Charles I., I hope you have not experienced any inconvenience by my reply being delayed, which was occasioned by my papers being in the Queen's Co., from which I have only just returned. As regards the theatricals, I applied to Mrs. Bourke, daughter of the late Mr. Robert Borrowes, who was son of the Lady Borrowes in question. She replied

<sup>1</sup> Mr. William Miot was a private collector of engravings, and some years later Gilbert purchased from him an interesting collection of Irish portraits.

as follows : 'My mother doubts Lady Borrowes ever having had a house in Kildare Street, as both she and I remember my father continually referring to his father's house in Leinster Street. My mother remembers my father and aunt often describing private theatricals in which they acted, as children, at Gilltown. She also remembers hearing that Lady Borrowes took part in the theatricals performed at Rathfarnham Castle, given by Lord Ely. It was in the house in Leinster Street<sup>1</sup> Miss Keatinge (Lady Moira's sister-in-law) took refuge when a price was set on her head by the English Government.'

"I regret I cannot give you more information on this point. Perhaps a notice or two of Robert Dixon (afterwards Sir Robert) may be worthy of your attention.

"By lease of February 28, 1624, the parishioners of St. Werburgh let to Captain William Meares, of Dublin, 'one house and garden with the appurtenances lying and being in Skinner's Row, within the said city of Dublin, which house and garden did lye in length from the King's pavement, or street, called Skinner's Row, in the north to Curryer's Lane that leaded then to St. Nicholas' church in the south, and from All Hallows ground on the east side to Caddell's ground, late in the tenure of John Murphy, on the west, for 19 years, for 19s. 8d. annual rent.' Captain Meares, by his indorsement of said lease, conveyed his interest therein to Robert Dixon, afterwards Sir Robert Dixon, Bart. ; this lease having been surrendered, the parishioners, by lease of April 1, 1662, conveyed to Sir William Dixon, Bart., heir-apparent of Sir Robert Dixon, the said house and garden with appurtenances, for 71 years, yearly rent 20 shillings. These premises were subsequently let by the parishioners to Colonel Robert Dixon, son of Sir Robert Dixon, and great grandson of Sir Robert, by lease of November 15, 1718, for 99 years, at the annual rent of £13. In 1718, the fashion of the locality being, I suppose, on the wane, the occupiers of the above premises were, in front, Mr. George Tufnell, wig-maker, in rear, his under-

<sup>1</sup> No. 9 ; prior to 1790 the residence of Sir Kildare Borrowes, Bart., who had been thirty years M.P. for Co. Kildare.

tenants. They were then bounded by Darby's coffee-house on the west, and Mr. Robert Owen's house on the east. I have a lease of the adjoining house on the east (either No. 13 or 12) dated 1719, then described as having been formerly the Old Dolphin."

The form of swearing in Robert Dixon as Mayor of Dublin is described in the Records of the Exchequer as follows:—

"30th September, 1633. Memorandum. That this day the Mayor, Recorder, and Aldermen of the Cittie of Dublin came in their scarlet gowns before the Right Honourable Thomas Lord Viscount Wentworth, Lord Deputy Generall of this kingdome, in his Majestie's castle of Dublin, where his Lordship being sett in his chaire of State in the Presence Chamber, the Mayor delivered unto him the whyte staff and sword of the cittie, and then, after Mr. Serjeant Catelyn, the Recorder, had made an eloquent oration, hee presented Robert Dixon, Esq., to be Mayor for this ensuing yeare, who having first taken the oath of the King's supremacy, and the oath of his office of Mayor, redd out to him by Robert Kennedy, Esq., the King's Remembrancer, the Lord Deputy delivered unto him the staffe of authoritie and sword of government of this cittie, which being donne, Sir Richard Bolton, Knight, Lord Chiefe Baron, very learnedlie and gravelie declared unto the said new Mayor the points of his chardge and dutie of his place, with admonition to discharge them accordingly; who having ended, the Lord Deputie, with greate gravitie and wisdome, did further advertise and admonish the saide Mayor to be faithfull in the execution and administration of justice in his saide office, to the advancement of his Majestie's service, and the honour and good of the cittie, and after much graciousness intimating how reddy hee would bee to assiste and countenance the said cittie in all their just and lawfull occasions; and so his Lordship ryseinge upp retyred himself into the withdrawinge chamber, and the saide Mayor and cyttyzens departed the Castle to performe the other ceremonies of the cittie as on that day accustomed."

“On the termination of his year of office of Mayor, Alderman Robert Dixon was knighted *at his own house* in Skinner Row. On the 1st Sept., 1645, he was returned to Parliament for the borough of Banagher. The authority for Sir Robert Dixon being knighted *in his own house* is Sir William Betham.”

After giving further particulars of the Dixon and Borrowes families and their connection with Skinner Row, Sir Erasmus continues—

“I have a very curious account of Colonel R. Dixon, when a very young man, in 1695, making a furious onslaught with pistols, swords, etc., on his kinsman and guardian, Annesley, in a narrow lane, throwing his horse upon him in a ditch. This was from some real or supposed mismanagement of Dixon's landed property by his guardian, and is a fine specimen of the ‘agrarian outrage’ indulged in by the gentry of that day. It is an appropriate set-off to Lord Dunsany's murderous attack on John Dixon” (in a quarrel about house property), “a copy of which I have the pleasure of enclosing.”

Concerning another old house of note, Lord Massereene assures the editor of the *Irish Quarterly Review* that “all the information he can give him respecting his grandfather's house in Molesworth Street is that it was bought from the Earl of Kerry, having been called Kerry House for many years, that it was pulled down after the Speaker sold it, and three houses are now erected on its site.” Lord Massereene goes on to say that he has two relics of the old Irish Parliament, viz. the mace of the House of Commons which his grandfather, Lord Oriel, the last Speaker, refused to give up to the Government, saying that until the body that entrusted it to his keeping demanded it he would preserve it for them; and the old chair of the House of Commons, which was removed at the last refitting of that House, when a new one was put in its place. Lord Massereene knows nothing of the house in Kildare Place mentioned as belonging to the Skeffington family. He always understood that a house in Kildare Street, sometimes called Massereene House, had

been sold by, or at the death of, his maternal grandfather, the fifth Viscount and first Earl of Massereene, but where it stood he knows not."

John P. Prendergast makes another contribution :—

"By lease of 2nd February, 1753, John Ensor demised to the Rt. Hon. Mary, Countess Dowager of Kildare, 'the dwelling-house on the north-west corner of Coote Street, otherwise Kildare Street, for 999 years, at a rent of £36 sterling.' This house is now occupied by Mr. John Rawson. The Archdall Mansion is the most northerly of the three houses in Kildare Street, *i.e.* nearest the Dublin Society. I am afraid I can get you little about Kildare Street. I hear that Kildare Street Club was founded on occasion of Burton Conyngham's being black-beaned at Daly's. I have never heard of any others than those you mention (nor indeed of half the number) as resident in Kildare Street."

*From Rev. James Graves,*

Secretary of the Kilkenny Archæological Society.

"When next in the Ormonde Evidence Chamber I will look if there is any trace of Carbury House there, and then ask Lord Ormonde's leave to communicate such matter as I find to you."

*From W. Waddington.*

"Whitehall, June 21, 1854.

"SIR,

"I am directed by Viscount Palmerston to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th instant, and to inform you that his lordship has authorized the Keeper of the State Papers to permit you to inspect and have copies of documents referring to the history of the city of Dublin in the State Paper Office.

"I am, sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"W. WADDINGTON."

Gilbert availed himself of the above official permission, leaving nothing undone in his labours of research, and at the end of the year 1854 the first volume of the "History of Dublin" was published by James McGlashan of that city, and hailed with delight, not only by the antiquarian and historian, the lover of local tradition and story and brilliant anecdote, and those whose family histories were touched on in its pages, but by the general public. The reviews from the highest quarters in London, Dublin, Edinburgh, and on the Continent, and from the provincial press in the three kingdoms, were lengthy and laudatory. The young author of twenty-five years was addressed in letters of congratulation and inquiry as a sage elder, who was giving to a younger generation the benefit of his years of study and experience; and many friendly suggestions were made by the wise seniors who were his friends, as to his method in the continuance of his work, as in the following letter:—

*From Dr. Abeltshausser.*

"9, Trinity College, Dublin,

"December 27, 1854.

"MY DEAR MR. GILBERT,

"I have nearly finished the vol. of your 'History of Dublin,' which has given me great pleasure, and which, I believe, will become a standard work.

"I intend to review it and to praise it, as it deserves, in the *Irish Church Journal*, but I wish to get some information about a few points. To what extent would you say do the augmentations go beyond the articles in the *Review*? I have not them at hand, and your information of what I ought to say will be sufficient.

"Do you not know the author of 'The Night before Larry was Stretched'? Are you aware that Chancellor Bolton lived in School-house Barn? Was not the Cock a celebrated tavern in Cook Street? Why did you omit Miss Byrne, the actress? Was she not connected with the Byrnes of

Mullinahac? I was present at some of the rows in Crow Street Theatre during the year '20 or '21 about her. When is the second vol. likely to appear? Some of our Collegemen find fault with the placing of the references at the end of the vol. I do not, for 99 in a 100, like me, will read the book without verification.

“I remain,  
“Yours faithfully,  
“I. G. ABELTSHAUSER.”

The critics alluded to forgot the great dimensions to which a volume of this nature would extend were footnotes appended to each page concerning every statement. Other suggestions were offered which would have been worthy of attention in a future edition of the work. Mr. McGlashan writes that Lord Talbot de Malahide considered it would add much to the interest of the book if the author would “give some representations of old buildings now removed, or any odds and ends of old Dublin.”

Gilbert had already in view such an addition to his work, and had early begun to collect material in prints and engravings of features of the city no longer to be seen, some of which he introduced, later, into the volumes of the “Calendar of the Ancient Records of Dublin.” Loud, however, as were the acclamations with which the work was received, and widely as it was read, first in the *Irish Quarterly Review* as “The Streets of Dublin,” and afterwards in three volumes as “The History of Dublin,” yet the fact that most Irishmen prefer horses to books—theatres, racecourses, and platforms to libraries—denied to the author a practical encouragement which might have resulted in an extension of the history over areas still untouched, and to its enrichment with pictorial illustrations, in themselves historic records. As the papers were issued quarterly, their publication extended over several years, the three volumes appearing at considerable intervals, and there was ample time for criticism and suggestion, also for the most cheering expressions of

sympathy with the author, and delight in the progress of his work. Some of the criticisms were amusing; as, for example, when an English Catholic journal rebuked the author for speaking of "Roman" Catholics, and for neglecting to make his history a guide-book with regard to all the "new" buildings of modern Dublin. Of the letters which poured in on him at this time, a few may be quoted for the interest attaching to the names of the writers, as well as for their suggestive matter. Men living in and around Dublin, or having connection with it, and the roots of whose kindred, so to speak, were deep in the city, looked on with surprise and exceeding interest, as a ray from the searcher's lantern made sudden revelation of circumstances and identities touching their own family antecedents.

From South Abbey, Youghal, the Rev. Samuel Hayman, the antiquarian, sends the following:—

"The *Review* is an honour to Ireland, and of all papers in it 'The Streets of Dublin' form the most attractive feature. To every antiquary they are perfectly fascinating. The information about the Kennedy family is most welcome to me. Until I read your article, I was in perfect ignorance of the issue of Walter Kennedy, the Baron's brother, and I deemed the family extinct. I have *many* particulars relative to Sir Richard Kennedy and his descendants (with whom I am allied, through the Jones family), which are at your service, if you deem them desirable. They would form some addition to what you have already given. Is it not singular that in no Baronetage of Ireland (with which I am acquainted) an account of the Family is given? Burke published an extinct Baronetage, and does not seem to have heard of the Patent to the Kennedys. I gave him some particulars for a periodical of his called *The Patrician*, which has ceased to be published. Should I meet with anything which may be of use to you, I shall take care to extract and duly forward it."

From the Record Office Lieutenant-Colonel Larcom informs Mr. Gilbert that a paper he is in quest of "formed part of a volume left unfinished by the Record Commissioners,



of which no part was ever published, nor, indeed, was the whole of the paper itself ever printed." A hope is expressed of procuring a copy, which shall be placed at the disposal of Mr. Gilbert. Mr. Wandesford writes from Castlecomer regretting that he cannot furnish any information relative to the house in Dame Street occupied by his ancestor. As the old house at Castlecomer was burnt in the Rebellion of 1798, it is possible that many papers of an interesting nature were burnt at the same time.

*From Rev. Dean Shea.*

"The Deanery, St. Patrick's, Dublin,  
"New Year's Day, 1855.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I am under many obligations to you for your valuable and most interesting 'History of Dublin,' and for which I pray you accept my very best thanks. It is a work of great merit, and was long wanted. You have done ample justice to the subject. I should like very much to have a conversation with you respecting localities upon which you have not yet touched, and which may probably form part of your next volume.

"Believe me, my dear sir,

"Most sincerely, your obliged  
"SAM. SHEA."

*From Digby P. Starkey.*

"Accountant-General's Office,  
"Four Courts, Dublin, January 2, 1855.

"Will you pardon me for so far obtruding myself upon one to whom I am a complete stranger? When a man publishes what everybody reads, he little knows what he brings down upon himself."

*From Dr. I. G. Abeltshauser, T.C.D.*

“32, Rutland Square, Dublin, January 2, 1853.

“DEAR SIR,

“I am obliged by the promptness of your answer, and am glad to observe from the tone of it what I had already noticed in our slight intercourse—an anxiety for giving information to the public above every other consideration.

“I now write to you to say, 1st, that my information about Chancellor Bolton is from *Big* Mr. Bolton of Malahide, his descendant, who, no doubt, will give you any information you may require; 2nd, the Cock Tavern in Cook St. is remembered by many old people. The Bishop of Cork told me a very droll story about a dinner-party there in honor of Dr. Hare's getting his fellowship. 3rd, Mr. Jones, the son of Fred Jones, has a number of documents from his father referring to the history of Crow Street Theatre; he will be happy to give you any information. He is at the Eccl. Com. 24, Up. Merrion St. He has anecdotes also concerning Fishamble St. house.

“I will take care to call attention to the state of the records. When Mr. Drummond was Under-Secretary I was asked if I would assist in the foreign department in arranging them, but his death prevented the work. Col. Larcom, who is a friend of mine, would be a very likely person to promote improvements in this department.

“I am, yours faithfully,

“I. G. ABELTSHAUSER.”

In the above letter there is a suggestion of the difficulties already met with by Gilbert in the neglected state of the records in Dublin, and which led to his taking action in the matter later, resulting in the establishment of the Public Record Office in Dublin.

*From Sir Charles Domvile.*

“Santry House, Santry, June 24, 1860.

“Sir Charles Domvile presents his compliments to Mr. Gilbert, and begs to ask whether he possesses any information on the subject of the Hell Fire Club? A large picture of a meeting of five of its members hangs at Santry House, and Sir Charles has the pleasure of sending Mr. Gilbert a card of admission in case he might like to see it.”

*From the Same.*

“39, Lower Jardine Street, London, August 12, 1860.

“SIR,

“In the event of your not publishing the second volume of your ‘History of Dublin,’ you may, perhaps, be inclined to dispose of some of the materials you have collected for it. If you have any records connecting the various *streets* with *families*, perhaps you would inform me, and probably you would also be good enough to let me have a list of the books of memoirs and smaller pamphlets which treat of what may be called the gossip of Society in Dublin during the fifty years preceding the Union.

“I am, sir, faithfully yours,

“CHAS. DOMVILE.”

Rev. A. B. Rowan, Belmont, Tralee, sends the following:—

“Excuse an antiquarian disciple for troubling you with a note respecting the interesting series of papers, said to be from your pen, care, and research, on the Streets of Dublin in the *Irish Quarterly Review*.

“When in Dublin about a month or so since, I read in the papers of a mad or over-driven bull having done much mischief in the streets, until finally hunted down and killed in ‘Roper’s Rest.’ Until then I was not aware that such a designation still existed for any part of the city. I find it, however, on inquiry, set down as in the purlieus somewhere, Merchants’ Quay-ward.

“My object in writing is to furnish you with a small memorandum concerning it. Among the records of my mother’s family (Denny) in a diary of family journal extracts, through two or three generations, I find the following entry made under date A.D. 1625: ‘I, Edward Denny, was married at Dublin, in Roper’s Rest House, to Ruth Roper, in Lent.’ This was Edward Denny, Knight, the third in descent of the name, settled in Ireland, married to Ruth Roper, daughter of Th. Roper, first Lord Baltinglass. At first I understood ‘Rest House’ to be merely a *lodging* house of the family at the time, but since I find it a prominent designation, it reminds me that in Edinburgh the town residences of the nobles and chieftains were called ‘rest houses,’ and therefore conclude that Roper’s Rest was the town residence of Lord Baltinglass. This note may serve a purpose for your papers.”

*From J. S. Lefanu.*

“18, Merrion Square South, Dublin, January 10, 1855.

“SIR,

“I take a great liberty in writing to you, but hope you will excuse my doing so, though I have not the pleasure of being known to you. Having read with great interest your first volume of the ‘History of Dublin,’ I remarked that your description of the ‘Carbrie’ (quoted from some authority of the seventeenth century) differs materially from that of the same building in the manuscript postings of the forfeited estates sold in William III.’s reign. I have no doubt that you are already acquainted with this document, which contains particular descriptions of, I think, about 200 houses in Dublin. It is in the King’s Inns Library. I have myself got a volume of rare tracts relating to Ireland, some of which illustrate Dublin. One, for instance, describes the ceremonial of the entrance of James II., and which I should be most happy to lend you, if you thought they might be of use. I forget whether you quote Fynes Moryson, who in his Itinerary gives a slight but curious description of Dublin.

“With regard to the ‘Castle’ there is in existence a manuscript journal of Archbishop King’s, kept while a prisoner there in James II.’s time, and I think I could put you in communication with the gentleman who possesses it, if you thought it desirable.

“Believe me, sir,  
 “Yours very truly,  
 “J. S. LEFANU.”

Another series of letters suggest the multitudinous inquiries of all kinds which sought information from the author who was supposed to know everything about the past of Dublin.

*From J. Huband Smith.*

“2, Holles Street, Dublin, August 20, 1855.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“May I ask, have you any memoranda, or can you refer me to any books giving further information beyond what you will see (by my manuscript book accompanying this) I have collected respecting the Round Tower which existed not long ago in Dublin? Miss Beaufort took my manuscript down to Dean Butler of Trim some time ago, and he sent it back to me last week with the note you will find in it. May I ask you not to keep it long, as I am working at a paper on the subject for the Royal Irish Academy. I have spoken a good deal to Mr. Ferguson and Mr. Charles Haliday also on the subject of this tower, and they have seen my notes, but not the drawing from the pen-and-ink sketch made in 1751, which poor Sir Wm. Betham was kind enough to lend me some time before his death.

“Believe me, my dear sir, truly yours,  
 “J. HUBAND SMITH.”

Concerning two “tradesmen’s tokens” issued by persons residing in Copper Alley, Edward Harris and Henry Gates, which coins were in the Royal Irish Academy Cabinet, Dr. Aquilla Smith asks—

“Can you tell me anything about Lady Fenton, mentioned

in Harris's 'History of Dublin,' p. 85? I presume she held some one of the patents which were granted for the coining of copper farthings. If I knew the time at which Lady Fenton distributed the money coined in Copper Alley, I could probably identify the coins."

The following is a specimen of the letter in search of ancestors:—

*From James Crosby.*

"3, Church Court, Old Jury, London,

"February 9, 1855.

"SIR,

"I take the liberty, and I hope you will excuse it, of asking whether in your collections relating to the residents in Dublin you have any particulars of a family of English descent of the name of Kidder. My maternal ancestor, Vincent Kidder (the second son of Vincent Kidder, of Aghaboe, in the Queen's County), was a Dublin citizen, a member of the Corporation about 1696, Master of the Goldsmiths' Company in that year, and High Sheriff of the County of the City of Dublin in 1718. He died in 1736. If you have any notes relating to this person and will communicate them to me, I shall be very deeply obliged. I have looked with much care through the vol. of your 'History of Dublin,' but do not meet with his name. Although any information will be most grateful, my chief object in troubling you is to ascertain, if I can, the parish in which this Vincent Kidder dwelt, in the hope that by a search of parochial registers I may obtain more particulars as to his marriage, issue, etc., than I am as yet in possession of.

"I was in Dublin in 1851, and I there made searches at the Rolls Court, the Prerogative Office, at the Registry Office, and I also examined a Pedigree of the Loftus family in a MS. vol. at Trinity College, in which his name occurs. In the underground rooms at the Custom House, where the business of the Goldsmiths' Company is transacted, I found his portrait, full-length, the size of life. Of that portrait I have

obtained a very good copy, many years since by his grandson, my late uncle; and by the kindness of Mr. Metcalfe, the clerk of the company, I afterwards obtained all such information as the Records of the Goldsmiths' could afford.

“I remain, sir, yours faithfully,  
“JAS. CROSBY.”

The success of the “History of Dublin,” the happy result of so much persistent labour and research carried on by the young man under twenty-five years of age, in the midst of so many other and distracting undertakings, was the cause of much joy to the mother and sisters, of whom this Benjamin of the family was the idol. To Mary especially, who had always been his chief companion, sympathizing with his ideals, and who had helped him in transcribing many items of his material, its triumph was delightful. Within the cover of one of the first volumes that came from the binders her name was inscribed by her brother above the date, December, 1854. Denis Florence MacCarthy, who was one of Gilbert's dearest friends, then and always, was scarcely less pleased with his success, and wrote to him on the occasion in his usual playful strain—

“You are so accustomed to praise that I know you would attach but little importance to any new accession of that cheap incense, even though the censer were swung by ‘a hand less unworthy than mine.’ Yet I cannot help *incensing* you by saying this at least, that I shall be greatly disappointed indeed if your book is not pronounced by universal acclamation the most important original contribution to local Irish history which this century has seen. In point of interest and attractiveness you have an easy victory over all your predecessors, not only in local, but in general Irish history. You have, in fact, ‘solved the Irish difficulty’ by proving that our history is not necessarily connected with insipidity, dryness, and want of attractions, which have been too long its position. You have done more: by a happy and characteristic accident you have shown the world, by the colour of the binding of your volume, that an Irish *blue*

book *must* be *re(a)d!* A miracle which I believe has never been effected out of Dublin."

A postscript to MacCarthy's congratulation was the well-known sonnet: "Written after reading Gilbert's 'History of Dublin.'"<sup>1</sup>

*From Mrs. Wilde.*<sup>2</sup>

"Do not think me ungrateful if I have delayed in acknowledging your very flattering presentation of the first copy of your book to me, but in truth I delayed that I might read it. It is wonderfully interesting, much more so to the general reader than the first volume, and I am happy to see that public appreciation has followed very rapidly on its production. I have but one little objection to offer. In the 'History of the Philosophical Society'<sup>3</sup> you scarcely appreciated my husband's labours. From the passage one might think he had only compiled a catalogue, whereas he *first* was the one who wrote the History and told the world all that is known on the subject. From the context it might be supposed that to Professor Sullivan all the glory was due, though his opinion does not seem to be of much importance to any one on the subject. Now, what he did say had already been said by worthier men. Besides, for I have not done yet with the unfortunate passage, posterity in 10 or 20 years will certainly think W. R. Wilde was a poor wretch of a clerk who copied catalogues for a livelihood. There is nothing to identify him as a man who has done something in his generation, both for literature and humanity, while the mythical professor of a mythical university will no doubt be held by them as *the* luminary of the age, when vapid commonplaces are thought worthy of immortality in Mr. Gilbert's 'History of Dublin.' Now, don't be angry with me. You can bear a little censure, can you not, at least from me? You know none hold your talents in higher estimation.

"Ever yours sincerely,  
"J. F. WILDE."

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards Lady Wilde.

<sup>3</sup> Later, the Royal Irish Academy.



Lady Wilde never dated her letters. On the publication of the third volume of the "History of Dublin," she wrote again—

"It is so interesting that I have not laid it down since I first opened it. That difficult chapter on the Parliament House is admirably done. It quite woke up all my old feelings, yet you never exceed the limits of calm historic truth. There are besides many other points of interest in the volume which bring the best time of Dublin and the best people vividly before the mind, for assuredly the people who heard Grattan must have been, for that very reason, a better race than the generation of to-day. The reviewers ought to do well by this volume, for you have given them stirring topics. I am glad my grandfather finds a place there, and I must thank you for the very graceful and kind manner you mention my husband. The details concerning 'the College' and 'the Statue' are very amusing and curious. Indeed, every page of the work has a vivid interest beyond the preceding volumes. Even the style appears to me better. It is free-er and more flowing . . . There is less dust, for we are leaving the lower strata and getting up into the recent formations. The names are familiar names—all those you give in Molesworth Street were my mother's friends—I have heard them all talked of so often. You should have said, I think, the Rev. C. R. Maturin, author of 'Bertram,' 'Moutoris,' 'Melmoth,' etc. He is better known by these than by anything else. However, it is not much matter. I have met many relations here and there mentioned; others will find the same, and this will make your volume especially interesting to the readers. The Foster family certainly should take a dozen copies, you have done them full justice; Mr. Magee another dozen, to buy up the very amusing absurdities of his father. You will become quite dreaded in Dublin. Such secret *dead* knowledge about our forbears! Do you know, I absolutely fell into a fit of tears over the last great scene of October 2, 1800, and had to shut up the volume for the night. See how dangerous your book is to the peace and repose of families. So, as I could read

no more, I thought I would write a line just to thank you and congratulate you, which I do with all my heart, and to express a hope that our country will honour and appreciate your labour, zeal, and learning as they so well deserve.

“Your obliged friend,

“JANE FRANCESCA WILDE.”

*From the Rev. John Henry Newman, D.D.*

“The Oratory, Birmingham, January 25, 1859.

“DEAR SIR,

“I have received ‘from the Author’ a copy of your ‘History of the City of Dublin.’ This was only a day or two ago, or I should have acknowledged it sooner.

“I beg now, though late, to thank you for it, and that, not only on the ground of the value of the work itself, which I perceive to be very great, but of the gratification which it has been to me to receive such a compliment from you.

“I am, dear sir, yours very faithfully,

“JOHN H. NEWMAN.”

On the publication of the third volume of the “History of Dublin,” the Cunningham gold medal of the Royal Irish Academy was awarded to the author. The medal is large, and of gold, value £25, having a spirited head of Lord Charlemont, first president of the institution.

The “History of Dublin” was never completed, a large portion of the city having been left untouched by the author, who had serious reasons, besides lack of encouragement from his fellow-countrymen, for quitting this interesting field for higher and wider ranges of Ireland’s history. It had been observed by some of the English reviewers that the Castle of Dublin had been inadequately dealt with; but Gilbert had reserved much material concerning that centre of Dublin’s story, having in view the publication of a work which he afterwards published under the title of a “History of the Viceroys of Ireland,” but which, as he said later, ought to have been described as a history of the English Government in Ireland.

## CHAPTER V

1855-1860

Member and Honorary Librarian of the Royal Irish Academy—*Dublin University Magazine*—John Edward Pigot's proposed newspaper—John O'Donovan—Excursion to Aran—Sir William and Lady Wilde—Irish Dictionary—Letters.

IN 1855 Gilbert was elected an honorary associate of the Genealogical and Historical Society of Great Britain and Ireland, and on April 9 in the same year was elected, by a large majority, a member of the Royal Irish Academy, entering as a life member. His proposers on this occasion were: the Earl of Dunraven; George Petrie, LL.D., vice-president; Charles Haliday; John Anster, LL.D.; Lieut.-Colonel Larcom; Eugene O'Curry; Rev. W. H. Drummond, D.D.; Lord Talbot de Malahide; Rev. James Henthorn Todd, D.D.; Aquilla Smith, M.D.; W. R. Wilde; John Francis Waller, LL.D.; Denis H. Kelly.

A year afterwards he was elected a member of the Council, and some years later honorary librarian of the Royal Irish Academy, an institution with which his lifelong close connection was thus firmly established.

The Archæological and Celtic Societies having been amalgamated in 1855, Gilbert became honorary secretary to the association known, after their union, as the Irish Archæological and Celtic Society. The members of this learned society began their labours of love for their country long before Government had moved in such matters. The Archæological Society was established in 1840, the Celtic

Society in 1847, while it was not till 1855 and 1857, respectively, that the publication of the "Calendars of State Papers" and of the "Rolls Series" was inaugurated under Lord Romilly, Master of the Rolls in England. The "Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts" was instituted as late as 1869.

As secretary of the society (a position which he held in conjunction with Dr. James Henthorn Todd, F.T.C.D.) young Gilbert was surrounded by a number of eminent seniors, men profoundly impressed with the need for disinterested effort on the part of some Irishmen in order to save the ancient literature of their country from passing into oblivion; also for collecting together Irish antiquities of all descriptions, to be deposited in one central treasury for the benefit of posterity. For the accomplishment of the latter work posterity owes its gratitude chiefly to Dr. (afterwards Sir William) Wilde, who, as a member of the Royal Irish Academy, employed a special genius for such matters and an irrepressible energy in struggling against the obstacles in the way of his self-assumed duties as collector; while to the exertions of the two secretaries it was mainly owing that the society was for many years enabled to continue its publication of various works of the utmost importance to the history of Ireland. Of the difficulties of such publication Dr. Todd wrote—

"Those alone who have been themselves engaged in such labours can fully estimate the impossibility of editing such a work with the care and accuracy of sound scholarship, unless sufficient time be devoted to the task. If, indeed, we had many editors, each engaged on different works, and if their labours could be put to press simultaneously, it would be possible to bring out a work once or twice in the year, without interfering with the caution and deliberation necessary in editing our long-neglected literature. But the society is aware that there are not more than four or five gentlemen competent to act as editors of our publications, and these have all given their labours gratuitously, in the midst of their professional and necessary avocations; nor is it possible to

expect from them more than they have done, and are doing, in the cause of the society."<sup>1</sup>

In the spirit suggested by the above fragment, a small group of earnest men did that work for the preservation of ancient Irish literature which has placed a large number of invaluable volumes on the shelves of the great libraries of the world, books which were anxiously looked for by the learned in all countries, and are now becoming rare. Among the enthusiastic workers with whom Gilbert was in daily intercourse were Dr. William Reeves (afterwards Bishop of Down and Connor); Dr. Charles Graves, F.T.C.D. (later Bishop of Limerick); Dr. Aquilla Smith; Dr. (afterwards Sir William) Wilde; Dr. John O'Donovan; Professor Eugene O'Curry; Dr. Charles W. Russell, President of Maynooth College. To O'Donovan and O'Curry the editors of the various works of the society looked for translations of manuscripts in which their material lay hidden under the (to them) almost impenetrable obscurity of the Irish vernacular.

As secretary of the Irish Archæological and Celtic Society alone, Gilbert had ample employment for the time of a man of unusual learning and energy, as is evidenced by the shoals of letters remaining, which request information on difficult points of history or matters antiquarian. Men, his elders by many years, engaged on works now associated with their distinguished names, looked to him for help on their questionable points, and unravelling of their hardest knots. Reading these letters, one is surprised that he could have had any other work on hands than the business and demands of the society, yet side by side with them he carried on his onerous private engagements, while the labours of his historical research were making vigorous progress. In the Bodleian Library, the British Museum, and other home and foreign storehouses of the written words of long-dead men, his transcribers were at work; and in every discoverable byway he sought persistently for his material.

<sup>1</sup> From a manuscript signed "J. H. Todd," and indorsed, "This was intended as the beginning of a report to be issued soon after the appearance of Reeves' book" (St. Columba).

He had now planned the "History of the Viceroys," and began to publish papers on the "Castle of Dublin" in the *Dublin University Magazine*; the *Irish Quarterly Review* having ceased to exist. In December, 1856, Mr. Cheyne Brady, editor of the *Dublin University Magazine*, wrote to him—

"I have no doubt whatever that you will render the papers worthy of your acquired reputation, and I shall be exceedingly pleased to be instrumental in furthering your views in any way within my power." A little later he writes, "Although the period you have treated in this chapter is remote, yet you have thrown considerable interest into your account of the ancient castle. I have no doubt your history will be very acceptable to all Irish readers." A day or two further on, however, he suggests, "I think it would be advisable to leave out some of the dates; they are very numerous in some places." Again the editor complains that the matter is "too antiquarian." He wishes the manuscript to be "compressed into a few pages," and only the "interesting portions" of the history of the castle and its governors proceeded with. The editor wanted light literature, and Gilbert was giving him serious history based on documentary evidence, with patient labour obtained. "Antiquarian lore," writes the editor, "derived from chronicles which may or may not be worthy evidence, is not sufficiently attractive to the readers of the magazine," and he urges the historian to "pass on quickly over the chronicling of events, and supply amusing incidents;" notwithstanding all which Gilbert pursued his way with the thorough integrity that characterizes his work.

Letters of this year (1855-6) show that his friend, John Edward Pigot, was dissatisfied with Gilbert for hesitating to incur fresh responsibilities, such as had caused him serious financial loss in the *Irish Quarterly Review*, and that he strenuously urged him to devote his pen and purse to the service of a projected new Irish newspaper, on the establishment of which Pigot had set his heart. While chafing at the

views of his young friend, Pigot at the same time pays a tribute to Gilbert's judgment and conscientiousness.

"I shall not enter into all your 'reasons,'" he writes. "Entertaining an opinion, either strongly unfavourable to or seriously suspicious of Mr. J——, that alone would be sufficient ground for declining to place him in so trusty a position. Yours are, in this matter, the same objections, exactly, as Dwyer's and O'Flaherty's; and for your objection on this score I have much more respect, because you had abundant opportunity to form a judgment, and I am sure your judgment is one for which you can give good grounds. As to the other objections, respecting insufficiency of capital, I entirely agree with you. I am strongly of opinion that less than £1000, would not be sufficient. It was also, I conceive, understood by all the men who promised to lend sums of £50, etc., that they were to do so upon being satisfied of £1000, at least, being completed, and with anything substantially less than £1000, I think, neither Sullivan nor Lyons, any more than you and Dwyer, would bring in their shares. I have enclosed your letter to Denny Lane of Cork, and asked him to consider all this, insisting that the project cannot go on till these difficulties are solved. . . . I feel very sensibly the position in which two men, for whom I have so much personal regard as well as so great respect and so high an opinion as you and Dwyer, have placed themselves with respect to a design which is in my mind of so much importance to the country, so much to a cause in which I myself have been ready to sacrifice all things, and for which I am ready still. The defection of you two diminishes the already too small stock of literary support to be calculated on, *dehors* the regular contributions of paid men. Without you two there is too little literary back to start properly such a paper as that proposed. I have counted so much on your good nature as to tell J—— you would give him the best advice in your power."

Gilbert was not a journalist, and his responsibilities were already as great as he could venture to incur. He gave his

financial assistance to John Edward Pigot's project, but the works by which he intended to serve his country were wider and deeper in their aim, further reaching and more lasting in their result than could be wrought through the medium of an ephemeral press, and he had resolution to pursue his own way, despite the urgent appeals of so admired and esteemed a friend, to lose it in the columns of a newspaper.

The following letters to Gilbert from Dr. John O'Donovan, the great Irish scholar, to whom Ireland is so deeply indebted, and of whom no record has as yet been written, except the short memoir published by Gilbert after O'Donovan's death, may find a place here :—

*From Dr. John O'Donovan.*

“Dublin, January 25, 1853.

“MY DEAR FRIEND,

“You would oblige me very much by lending me for a very short time ‘Camden's Remains,’ writ in English, and Richard Verstegan's ‘Restitution of Decayed Intelligence.’

“I am working at Irish surnames, and I am anxious to compare our surnames and sobriquets with those used by our neighbours in the *larger* island. I know not whether the Welsh have produced any work on the subject of their *aps* and *maps*. If they have, I never saw it. I have varieties of little books on names of ancient places produced in Scotland, England, etc., but none on the surnames of men or tribes. Do you happen to know of any? Hoping that you will pardon this trouble, I remain ever sincerely your well-wisher,

“JOHN O'DONOVAN,

“Son of Edmond, 1817,

“Son of Edmond, 1798,

“Son of William, 1749,

“Son of Cornelius,

“Son of Edmond, a homicide, 1643,

“Son of Donell, 1618,

“Son of Donell, a savage, 1584.”



*From the Same.*

“I find that the word  $\text{comu}\mu\text{a}\text{i}\text{i}\text{j}\text{a}\text{i}\text{j}\text{s}$ , which I have rendered *rowers*, is glossed ‘victorious,’ ‘active,’ ‘energetic,’ etc. Burren, to which this epithet is applied, is bounded on the north by the Bay of Galway, and on the west by the Atlantic Ocean. Its surface is very like that of the Aran islands, which you saw in 1857, and the epithet ‘claidh-reidh’ applies to the stone fences, through which one could read a book. Now, uniting the two epithets, and ascribing them to Burren, a very strange picture is presented to the mind. Burren, of smooth ditches, the victorious; meaning, Burren of the dry-walled ditches, famed for victories.  $\mu\text{a}\text{i}\text{i}\text{j}$  means an *oar*. ‘Clonroad’ means the plain of the long oars or rowers. Epithets of this kind have no meaning at all, so that it matters little how they are translated. ‘Burren, the victorious, famed for limestone DITCHES,’ is the meaning, but by ditches you are to understand hedges or fences, not TRENCHES.

“Yours ever,

“JOHN O'DONOVAN.”

[In Ireland, be it noted, the fence is always called the ditch to this day.]

*From the Same.*

“Dublin, March 19, 1855.

“You often told me that I had no HOPE. You are right, and so much the better for myself. I have no hope, and no ambition, and therefore I seldom feel disappointed.

“When old Betham died, I applied to the Government to be appointed Keeper of the Irish Records, and was informed by the said Government that the office of Keeper of the Records was then held by Lord Stanhope, whose *deputy* Sir Wm. Betham had been; and the said Government added that, despite of all agitations on the part of Irish patriots, the said office would be abolished on the decease of the said

*Stanhope!* So much for Irish offices! I have no belief in any justice for Ireland, or for any other country, unless Ireland, and such other countries, are able to demand justice with the tongue, or fist, or sword. Ireland has lost all those instruments recently, and therefore she must rest content with having injustice copiously dealt out to her. I enclose you a note from the Marquis of Kildare to me on this subject, written immediately after the death of old Sir William Betham, who had been for years Deputy Keeper of the Irish Records to Lord *Stan-hope*, though neither the knight nor the lord could *even read* the records. Please return to me this note of the marquis, and let me have a few *serious* thoughts of your own about the abolition of the office, and upon my still standing hope that it is already as abolished as the Irish professorship in Galway. I have every respect for your judgment, but I think that your *bump of hope stands* too well developed for our present *blue look-outs*."

*From the Same.*

"Oxenford, 13, Clarendon Street, July 10, 1855.

"I write to inform you that I am working here in the Boadleen  $\text{b\ddot{o}c-l\acute{e}j\text{z}j\text{ij}}$  (miraculous!!) from 9 till 4 every day. As the large clock of St. Mary's is striking 4, a bell is tingled, and then I must run out and *idle* the rest of the long day wandering amid the fragrant meadows and Elysian shades of Oxenford ( $\text{a\acute{c} ij\text{c}aiij}$ ), and along the flowery banks of the river Isis. . . . I have heard the cuckoo ( $\text{aij \acute{c}ua\acute{c}}$ ) at the ominous left hand side, from which I need not expect any good luck till next May, when I trust she will sing cuckoo into my *superstitious right ear*, in the valley of Ercail, at Slieve Mis, in Ulidia, where St. Patrick fed the swine of his Master Milco. If she does so, I shall be very much obliged to her *indeed*, but I fear she intends to persecute me with her sinister presages! as the ravens did the Mantuan shepherds of old.

"I wrote to Dr. Wilde, desiring him to tell YOU that I

was sporting on the flowery banks of the Isis, and that I was most willing to obey your orders with respect to setting scribes at work for you ; but this Wilde man of Connemara has taken no notice of my letter (show him this if you meet him), and therefore I have ventured to stick the *only head* which I have left remaining (my own head is gone) to the cover of this, and send it reeling in its headlong race over field and flood in the direction of a little village (in a small island in the western ocean) called Dinas Dulin. Should it arrive there safely, and bring you this little epistle, let it inform you that I shall be *idling* here till about the first of August or thereabouts ; hoping that you are preparing to enjoy a tour among the fragrant meadows and richly cultivated fields of Conmaiene-mara (*loca amana*) overlooking the *frothy* fields of the Claddagh fishermen !

“ My Irish translation of Tupper’s ridiculous universal hymn was printed and sent forth to all the nations except Japan and the island of Raratonga. I reduced his jargon to sound sense, but still nobody will understand me ! Is not this provoking ?

“ I remain, with great veneration for your family (I mean the books), yours,

“ JOHN O'DONOVAN.”

*From the Same.*

“ Oxford, July 18, 1855.

“ This is awful trifling from one who has worked all day and all night till now when the clock of St. Mary’s is tonguing twelve ! I am glad that our friend, O’Callaghan, is returning to the warlike figures ! He has been so long in the kitchen of history that he would appear to have served his time to Alexis the Savoury, whom the Irish call the Sawyer (Soyer). When I knew him first, which was before his courage broke down during the Young Ireland war in the Cabbage Garden, his figures and tropes were usually conjured up from old warlike weapons and instruments of torture such

as I saw in the Tower of London—the hissing arrow, the battle-axe, the longbow, the thumb-screw, the gory block, the *divine treachery* of an ambuscade, etc., etc. Afterwards, he dwindled into a mere gourmand (not glutton), the warlike spirit (*animo bellicoso extincto*) having died within him when Smith O'Brien took the field!

“I am tired of Dr. Wilde and his demons! I spent a long time searching for ghosts in the Boadleen for him during the last week. Now, I have no more space, so I intend to sleep.

“Mr. Gilbert’s address is, ‘Dublin, Ireland.’ Dublin ought to know him. J. T. Gilbert, Esq., author of the ‘History of Dublin,’ etc., etc.”

*From the Same.*

“London, 8, Alfred Street, Bedford Square,

“1855.

“I have at last found the submissions of the Irish chieftains to King Richard II. in the Lambeth Library referred to by Cox, but they are evidently copies made by Carew (Sir George), who was making great preparations to recover the kingdom of Cork! . . . If the originals cannot be had, I must copy Carew’s Manuscript. They are exceedingly curious, and scientifically drawn by an English lawyer, whose name is given. They were translated into English for the use of the natives of the Pale, and into Irish for the use of the wild men of the woods. I have got permission from the Master of the Rolls to examine the State papers, which are still unexplored, but it would take 100 men 100 years to read them. Mr. Hans Hamilton, who has been employed for the last fourteen years calendaring them, gave me references to all the Irish letters (letters in the Irish language) which he has noticed, and I shall get all these and all references to the Brehon laws copied.

“Excuse this scribbling. I have worked so hard to-day that my hand is hardly able to hold the pen!

“Remember me to Mr. O’Callaghan, and tell him that

I am gloating over the letters of the spies in Ireland. Walker's letter to Mountjoy is worth any money. He, Walker, undertook to cut off Tyrone's head, but when he arrived in the Earl's presence the Earl slook hands with him, and so won upon him that he, Walker, could not find it in his heart to stab him, although he had the dagger ready! The Earl told him to hasten away, lest his guards might see him and arrest him. He told all this to Mountjoy, who took him to be a spy employed by the papists in England to confer secretly with O'Neile!! Mountjoy took him prisoner!"

To John Cornelius O'Callaghan, author of the "History of the Irish Brigades," at some of whose conversational peculiarities O'Donovan hints in another letter, he wrote the following, two years before that summer in Oxford; still more suggestive of labour and disappointment:—

*From the Same.*

"MY SUBLIME FRIEND,

"You will oblige me by giving the enclosed letter to Mr. Gilbert, who requested of me to give him a slight sketch of the biography of the hero who forms the subject of it. It may be published after his death, but nothing can be gained by noticing any of the details just now. We all must inevitably suffer much between the cradle and the grave; and if we suffer afterwards, we are an unfortunate race of animals produced by a marriage between Heaven and Earth.

"Yours ever truly and sincerely,

"JOHN O'DONOVAN."

During the next ten years, Gilbert was at the helm, so to speak, of the Irish Archæological and Celtic Society, managing its business affairs, appealed to on all sides for information and help, not only by the workers within it, but by readers and thinkers and authors far outside of it; and while pursuing his researches with a view to future publications

of history, he was writing in various reviews of the day on subjects connected with the history of Ireland, and with its little-known artistic and literary treasures. In the *Dublin University Magazine*, the *Dublin Review*, the *Athenæum*, and *Gentleman's Magazine*, these papers came forth from time to time during the early sixties as exposition of much that had been done by the Irish scholars O'Donovan and O'Curry, also of the neglected state of the Irish records, from which the historian who would deal fairly with Ireland was obliged to seek his material, too often in vain. During this period, of the letters which appealed to him for information on difficult matters, associated with distinguished names in Ireland, England, Scotland, France, and Germany, even those that remain would fill a large volume.

"I hope," writes Dr. John Stuart, of Edinburgh, in 1861, "that when you have time to examine the 'Sculptured Stones of Scotland,' you will kindly favour me with any suggestions as to analogies between them and your own monuments."

Rev. James Graves asks, "Can you give me any notes about the Irish Privy Council or their records?"

Paul Bridson, Hon. Sec. of the Manx Publication Society, writes: "I have a manuscript in the Irish character, lent me by a friend, which I cannot find any one that can decipher here, and which I have by this post sent you. I am told that it contains some information relative to our islands. Would you kindly put it into the hands of some of your Irish scholars, who would perhaps report as to whether it was worthy of publication? It appears to be beautifully written."

The Rev. Samuel Hayman, the distinguished antiquary of the south of Ireland, asks, "What, in your mind, was the 'broad stone' that anciently existed in several of our cities and towns? There is a Broad Stone in Dublin, whence the designation of the Midland Railway terminus. There was a Broad Stone in Youghal, almost in the centre of the town, and a narrow byway near it received the name of Broad Stone House in consequence. No trace of the Broad Stone

now exists here, but I have several mentions of it in the records.

“What a charming book is your ‘Dublin!’ May I take the opportunity of thanking its author for the exceeding gratification its perusal afforded me.”

D. H. Kelly, Mount Talbot, writes—

“A friend of mine in France is anxious to get a plan of the battle of Aughrim, and referred me to Harris, where he said it was, but in my large folio edition of the ‘Life of William III.’ I do not find it. Can you tell me where I can refer to it, and you will confer an obligation on me, and if at the same time you would give me the number of the Ordnance Sheet of Galway, which contains the battlefield, you would enhance the obligation.”

On the flyleaf of this letter remains pencilled in Gilbert’s writing: “Ordnance Survey, Co. Galway, Sheet 87. Harris, ‘Hist., Life, and Reign of Wm. III. ;’ folio. Date 1749. At page 267 a plan of the battle of Aughrim. A plan is also at page 134 of George Story’s continuation of the projected ‘Hist. of the Wars of Ireland, 1693.’”

In September, 1857, an excursion of the Ethnological and Geographical Section of the British Association took place, in which Gilbert played an active part in conjunction with Dr. Wilde, hoping that some lasting memorial of the occasion, useful to Ireland, would be the result. In March, 1858, a circular was issued by the committee. The names of the members of the committee run as follows:—

*President.*

Rev. Richard MacDonnell, D.D., Provost, Trinity College, Dublin.

*Committee.*

C. C. Babington, M.A., F.R.S., St. John’s College, Cambridge.

Eugene O’Curry, M.R.I.A.

F. de Burgraff, Consul for France, Dublin.

Samuel Ferguson, M.R.I.A.

John T. Gilbert, Secretary, Irish Archæological Society.

John Grattan, Belfast.

Martin Haverty, Askeaton.

Rev. J. H. Jellett, F.T.C.D.

J. M. Mitchell, Secretary for Foreign Correspondence, Antiquarian Society, Scotland.

John O'Donovan, LL.D.

Thomas O'Hagan, Q.C.

George Petrie, LL.D., M.R.I.A.

Dr. Norton Shaw, Secretary, Geographical Society, London.

Professor Simpson, Edinburgh.

Dr. Stokes.

Thomas H. Thompson.

Charles Graves, D.D., }  
Andrew Armstrong, } *Secretaries.*

The circular stated that—

“At the meeting held at Dun-Aengus, the Very Rev. the Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, in the chair, it was unanimously resolved—‘That, to carry out the design of this excursion, the necessary steps should be taken to secure the publication of such a work on the Islands of Aran as might promote the interests of Ethnological and Archæological Science, and at the same time serve as a lasting memorial of our appreciation of the services of Mr. Wilde, as director of the excursion.’

“The committee appointed to decide upon the means to be adopted for carrying the above resolution into effect met on the 2nd inst., at the Provost's house, T. C. D., the Very Rev. the Provost in the chair, when it was resolved—

“‘That, with a view to accomplish the object proposed, the secretaries be requested to solicit the subscriptions and co-operation of the gentlemen who took part in the excursion.’

“Mr. Babington offered the use of some cuts prepared for illustrating a paper on the Islands of Aran, published by him in the *Archæologia Cambrensis*.

“Mr. Armstrong stated that, after defraying all the expenses of the excursion, a balance of nearly £10 remained at the disposal of the committee.”



The result proved such as is too usual in Ireland, where literary or artistic enterprises are concerned. Little interest was aroused outside the small circle of enthusiastic workers, and in April, 1859, it was announced by the secretaries, Dr. Charles Graves and Andrew Armstrong, when presenting a report of the excursion to the public—

“That the amount subscribed for carrying out Dr. Graves’ resolution being quite inadequate to the production of a work illustrative of the ancient monuments of Aran, the committee reluctantly abandon their intention, and the subscriptions that have been paid will be returned.”

In the Royal Irish Academy there are three separate committees, to promote, severally, the interests of “Polite Literature” (chiefly in connection with Ireland), of “Antiquities,” and of “General Science;” and the enthusiasts on one of the above subjects would, on occasions, collide with some whose ardour was centred in another. Wilde was often engaged in a struggle to carry out the work of the treasure trove, and his “Catalogue of the Antiquities,” collected with so much zeal and perseverance by him, was not a catalogue only, but a valuable work giving the histories and uses of the ancient objects enumerated. He had more than one residence in the west of Ireland, to which he escaped when his professional engagements permitted a holiday, carrying on his antiquarian search among the bogs and mountains.

Wilde was noted for his hospitality, in which he was well supported by his wife, who was known in Ireland as “Speranza,” author of much stirring and patriotic verse and prose, published in the *Nation* newspaper at, or before, the troubled period of 1848. She was at that time Jane Francesca Elgee, described by some who knew her as extremely attractive in appearance and brilliant in conversation. In connection with her zeal in politics, it is recorded of her that when the editor of the *Nation* (Charles Gavan Duffy) was indicted for an article published in his paper, Miss Elgee surprised the court by rising from her seat among the crowd and claiming the honour, or the offence, as writer of the article

in question. Though of a good family, "Speranza" was not then in prosperous circumstances, and to her credit it may be said that she worked persistently and disinterestedly for the *Nation* without receiving that remuneration which was her due. Later, as Lady Wilde, she was eccentric in dress and "ways," and many amusing anecdotes have been told of her peculiarities; but she was of a kindly nature, and warm and sincere in her friendships, and she had a commendable desire to make her house a social centre for all who were engaged in intellectual pursuits, or interested in literature or the arts. Any stranger or foreigner of intellectual or artistic distinction or aspiration arriving in Dublin was certain of an invitation to Lady Wilde's assemblies. The hostess dressed in long, flowing robes of Irish poplin and Limerick lace, and was adorned with gold chains and brooches modelled on the ancient ornaments of Erin's early queens. Sir William Wilde's peculiarities were equally noted, and many a witticism floated about Dublin at the expense of the harmless eccentricities of the Wildes. Both husband and wife did genuine service to Ireland in their day, and they had many friends. Gilbert was a favourite with them, was often present at their social reunions, and sometimes accompanied Wilde in his raids on Connemara, or the plains of Moytura, in search of treasure trove.

In letters to Gilbert, Wilde complains of the Committee of Antiquities, and even of Dr. Petrie, the president of that committee, for not approving of his arrangements. "Don't you think it would be stupid to have a silver brooch in the same case with a stone celt of a thousand years anterior, while said brooch would form part of a beautiful group of such articles in our silver collection? I think Petrie will agree with this view. Just make a note of the following subjects, and get answers thereon:—1. Localities of the boats. 2. State of the light. 3. Numbering of Museum. 4. Dublin Society things. 5. Placing articles in Museum. I send you the letter to read, that you may see what I require."

In another letter, he says—

“Ever since I commenced the arrangement and cataloguing of the Museum, I have, as you are aware, upon all occasions, where I thought it was required, consulted the Committee of Antiquities. And although I consider the Museum still in my hands and those of Mr. Clibborn, the Curator, I requested the opinion of the Committee of Antiquities upon three several subjects on the last day of meeting. It was therefore with considerable surprise I learned that, without consulting me upon the subject, the Rev. Dr. Reeves and Mr. Hardinge brought up and had passed at the Council a series of resolutions respecting the Museum upon the last day of meeting. . . . With respect to the want of authority for such a proceeding on the one hand, or as regards its discourtesy towards myself on the other, it is not my intention now further to advert, as I purpose bringing the matter before the Council at its next meeting. My object in communicating with you now is, to state that I respectfully beg to decline the invitation sent through you to meet the Committee of Antiquities on Saturday next. Considering that I have studied the wishes, or taken the advice of the Academy, the Council, or the Committee of Antiquities on all matters relating to the Museum during the last three years, I think the circumstance I advert to is to be regretted. I can assure the Committee of Antiquities that no one, either in or out of the Academy, is more anxious to complete the arrangement of the Museum and the work of the Catalogue than I am.”

Another hasty note says, “Will you at the meeting to-day present my resignation to the Council of the Celtic and Archæological Society?” Yet another, “Come dine at 3 o'clock to-morrow, and we will start by the 4 o'clock train to work up the antiquities.” A third rejects the suggestion that the Academy might be requested to bestow on him its gold medal for the work of his Catalogue. His invitations to his hospitable house are plentiful. “To-morrow is Oscar's birthday, and you are such a favourite of his you must be sure to come and dine.” Or, “Billy has

passed his examination, and you will join us in drinking his health."

*From Dr. Wilde.*

"1, Merrion Square, Dublin, March 13, 1860.

"As Sullivan lost the celt, and as I am accountable to the Academy for a certain number, he should, I think, send me one to replace it. You know the trouble I already had when Pigot called upon me to identify and account for a number of these articles. Who was Derricke, who wrote the 'Image of Ireland'? Was he a Scotchman? I am not at all sure about the costume in his tract; nor the piper either.

"Have you any correspondent at Nantz of whom you could ask a question for me about the man who sent me the figure of the celt—Mr. Krauenflect? Do you know anything about the old seal of the Corporation? I have got the loan of it, and have had some good impressions in gutta-percha taken from it. The costumes are very curious. I wonder to what precise period it refers. I have had a copy sent to Sir B. Burke, and will give another to Aquilla Smith. I hope to get the matrix for the Academy.

"Unless you and other friends look sharp, our friend Pigot will go out, and —— will come in, without any other change. An alarm has been sounded, and the 'Recorder' is at work."

*From the Same.*

"I have been so busy I have not had time to visit you. I have finished the spears, and hope to conclude in about three more sheets. I am now up to the food implements, and want you to give me some references to cauldrons, cooking vessels, or anything pertaining thereto.

"I send you a proof to do your endeavours upon. I have just heard that the set of casts from Mayence are on their way to Dublin. If the vessel arrived, and that we could get them through the custom-house before the Academy meeting on Monday evening, they might be exhibited."

*From Denis Florence MacCarthy.*

“1854.

“When you told me that the new number of the *Irish Quarterly Review* contained some strictures on our friend Dr. Wilde, I little thought that the castigation was inflicted by the fair hand of your reviewer. You have, of course, seen the announcement [in Saunders' News-Letter] that the *Irish Quarterly Review* is the property of Dr. Wilde, that he is also the editor, and that the leading articles *are all written by him and his gifted wife, Speranza!* Now, as I suppose that even doctors perform painful operations on themselves but very rarely, I must conclude that the critical scalpel was in this instance wielded by the editor's gifted partner, Speranza. What a touching tableau this would make! What a sublime picture of private feeling sacrificed on the altar of critical justice! Talk of Brutus, and his sons, the Warden of Galway and young Lynch, or any other tragedy of ancient or modern times! What are they all to the idea of Speranza, terrible and beautiful as an Amazon, with one hand brandishing an enormous steel pen dripping with the avenging fluid, and then dashing it in the face of the pallid and collapsed Wilde, who lies drooping and subdued across the other arm of the heroine!

“Oh! for the pencil of Cruikshank or Doyle, or, better still, *Leech* (typical of the profession of the victim), to depict such a group!”

With regard to Wilde's struggles in the cause of the antiquities, Martin Haverty, author of a “History of Ireland” and other works, writes to Gilbert, “When last in town I saw Dr. Wilde. He seemed a good deal annoyed about the proceedings in the Academy, and I think justly. He has been badly treated.” In a later letter the same correspondent remarks, “I am afraid, as you observe, that our friend Dr. Wilde has been too hasty with the Academy. His nature is too impulsive, if it could be helped.”

During this period Gilbert did work for the Kilkenny Archæological Society, of which he was honorary secretary for Dublin.

In January, 1856, the Rev. James Graves wrote to him, "Mr. Evelyn Philip Shirley has given us for publication in the *Journal of the K.A.S.* a very curious MS. tour in Ireland in the time of Charles II. Would you take the Dublin part?" Later, he writes, "I quite agree with you that the best mode of annotating such documents as you allude to is that indicated by you. Many thanks for the trouble you have taken about the matter. I learn from Reeves that he is at work on a life of St. Columba. Dr. Graves, I am told, is doing nothing for the Ogham book. What a pity." In another letter, "By this post I send you the Dublin portion of Dineley's *Irish Tour*. You will kindly mark such monuments and inscriptions as have been already described, or given in full, also what illustrations you think worthy to be engraved. No one is so well qualified as yourself to make the selection. Is the map of Dublin of any interest? You will know best, none better, how to note the text. The only way to make the Exchequer records accessible would be to appoint a person to take charge of them who would be able to read them and have an interest in their preservation. You have truly described their present state." In 1859 Rev. J. Graves writes again, "Your second volume ('*History of Dublin*') is full of interesting and important historical matter, as well as curious details, only to be unearthed by multifarious reading. The Latin poem must be a very curious one. Let me know what you think of it. I wish you all success in your gigantic undertaking."

Martin Haverty, then engaged on a "*History of Ireland*," writes in the same year—

"I wish you would give me some kind suggestion about my Herculean task. I feel greatly at a loss for some consecutive narrative of facts on the Irish side of the question (since the Four Masters and Sullivan deserted me), and I am now in the 1641 business, where every writer appears to

suppose that you know the chain of the story already and only gives his own view of particular portions of it."

It was his large perception of the difficulties deplored in the above letter, his honest hatred of the false methods by which history upon history has been compiled, that determined Gilbert on publishing no statement unaccompanied by indisputable documentary evidence, and in his preface to the "History of the Viceroys" he explains this aim.

The history of the rise and progress of a project to compile and publish a complete Irish Dictionary belongs to this active period of the Irish Archæological and Celtic Societies, of which Gilbert was secretary. As far back as 1852 (November 23) a meeting of the Irish Archæological and Celtic Societies was held at Dr. Todd's rooms in Trinity College, Dr. Charles Graves in the chair, when it was proposed by Dr. Todd, and seconded by Major-General Larcom and resolved, "That the Councils of the Irish Archæological and Celtic Societies do undertake to promote and superintend the publication of a complete Irish Dictionary." A committee of noblemen and gentlemen, members of the societies, was appointed, and an address was issued to the public, inviting general subscriptions to the work, which was to be edited by Dr. John O'Donovan and Eugene O'Curry.

The exclusive occupation of O'Donovan and O'Curry on the work of the Brehon Laws Commission made it impossible for them, at that time, to proceed with another weighty undertaking. The enterprise was not, however, lost sight of in the mean time, for in 1859 Mr. John Martin, of Kilbroney, Rostrevor (by a letter of January 10), placed at the disposal of the committee the sum of £200, being a sum equal in amount to that of a testimonial subscription presented to him in Australia in 1854, and which he desired to see used in aid of the project for preparing and publishing a complete Irish Dictionary. This gift was accompanied by a condition that by July 1, 1860, contributions should have been received by the committee making up the sum of £1000, required for the preparation of the work for press.

This, with a former donation (or bequest) from William E. Hudson of an equal sum (£200), placed in the hands of the committee a little fund which was held in reserve till July, 1860, when fresh steps were taken to give some impetus to so desirable a movement. By that time the fund had been increased by prudent investment, and amounted to £441 18s., with promise of a further sum of £50, from Mr. John Martin (received from Australia) in case the general subscriptions during the course of another year should swell the fund to the amount of £1000.

In June, 1860, John Edward Pigot addressed a letter to the public on the part of the Irish Dictionary Committee, containing the following statements:—

“The importance of the Celtic language, and the position which it holds in comparative philology, are now fully recognized by continental scholars, who naturally look to Ireland for the assistance, not to be obtained elsewhere, necessary for the prosecution of such studies.

“The great want is a dictionary comprehending the existing remains of the language, and brought out in a creditable and scholar-like manner.

“To effect this object it is necessary to appeal to the public for funds.”

The circular issued at this time by the committee further states—

“Quite irrespective of historical and literary researches in Ireland, such an aid is imperatively required in the interests of general learning in Europe. The ancient Irish language has, for more than twenty years, attracted the attention of the learned in France and Germany; and from Adolphe Pictet in Geneva to the celebrated German scholar, Caspar Zeuss, in Bamberg (whose able investigations into the Irish are at this moment so vigorously pursued by a school of enthusiastic followers), the philologists of the continent have sorely felt the want of a work which it is the peculiar duty of Ireland to provide for their use as well as for her own.



“The materials for such a dictionary are fortunately abundant, and a great part of them lies ready for use without any considerable alteration. During the many years which Dr. O’Donovan and Mr. Eugene O’Curry have devoted to the study of the language much matter has accumulated under their hands, chiefly authorities fixing or proving the various meanings of the words of which a very great number have long passed out of use and are not now vernacularly understood. Many thousands of these escaped the notice of O’Reilly, and many more have been wrongly explained by the inaccurate writers of the past century.

“The collection of Mr. Eugene O’Curry particularly affords ample foundation upon which to form a complete dictionary. That collection, constantly added to during the past five-and-twenty years, embraces above 12,000 articles, each word having appended to it an extract from and reference to the passage of the manuscript where it was found, and which, by the context or otherwise, defines its meaning; and very few of this immense mass of words, though occurring abundantly in ancient manuscripts of acknowledged authority, can be found in any printed dictionary.

“Dr. O’Donovan has also, for many years back, noted down many words, and has made a number of valuable corrections of the almost endless errors committed by O’Reilly, as regards the orthography and signification of words contained in his work.

“The names of the committee of 1860, including those of the original committee of 1852, are as follows:—

The Marquis of Kildare, M.R.I.A.

The Earl of Dunraven, M.R.I.A.

\*The Lord Talbot de Malahide, M.R.I.A.

\*William Jones Armstrong, D.L.

Rev. Samuel Butcher, D.D., F.T.C.D., M.R.I.A.

Eugene O’Curry, M.R.I.A.

\*John Thomas Gilbert, M.R.I.A.

Rev. Charles Graves, D.D., F.T.C.D., Sec. R.I.A.

William Elliott Hudson, M.R.I.A. (*deceased since 1852*).

- Major-General Thomas Askew Larcom, C.B., M.R.I.A.  
 \*John Martin, Esq.  
 John O'Donovan, M.R.I.A.  
 Very Rev. Laurence O'Renehan, D.D. (*deceased since 1852*).  
 George Petrie, LL.D., V.P.R.I.A.  
 John Edward Pigot, M.R.I.A.  
 Rev. William Reeves, D.D., M.R.I.A.  
 Rev. Thomas Romney Robinson, D.D., M.R.I.A.  
 \*Rudolf Thomas Siegfried, Ph.D.  
 \*Whitley Stokes, Esq.  
 \*William Kirby Sullivan, Ph.D., M.R.I.A.  
 Rev. James Henthorn Todd, D.D., S.F.T.C.D., P.R.I.A.”

NOTE.—The names marked with an asterisk are those of members co-opted since the original movement in 1852.

## CHAPTER VI

1860-1862

Irish Manuscripts—Convent of St. Isidore, Rome—Death of  
O'Donovan and O'Curry—Letters.

AT this time serious students of Irish history were very desirous of an opportunity to examine the important Franciscan manuscripts, of which the Convent of St. Isidore at Rome was the repository, and Gilbert proposed that the Irish Archæological and Celtic Society should endeavour to have them conveyed to Dublin. In this he was warmly seconded by Dr. Todd.

On September 23, 1858, Dr. James Henthorn Todd wrote from Silver acre, Rathfarnham—

“MY DEAR FRIEND,

“It would be well worth while to make the attempt to get the manuscripts, but I doubt if the St. Isidore people would lend them to the Royal Irish Academy. It seems to me that it would be better to get Dr. Russell to ask a loan of them for Maynooth College. However, if you think that the attempt on the part of the Academy would not be labour in vain, by all means summon the Committee of Antiquities for Monday next.

“Faithfully yours,

“J. H. TODD.”

In July of the next year, Professor Eugene O'Curry drew up a “Statement relative to the Irish Manuscripts of the College of St. Isidore at Rome, for the information of their lordships the Archbishops and Bishops of Ireland, in

connection with the deputation appointed by the Senate of the Catholic University of Ireland, in conformity with the recommendation of the Committee at p. 63 of their Report."

In this brochure O'Curry gives an interesting history of the foundation of the Irish College at Louvain, "to afford the ardent, unconquerable youth of Ireland the means of general mental cultivation and preparation for the sacred ministry from which they were completely cut off at home." He tells us that the "three noble Franciscans," Hugh Ward, a native of Donegal, first Professor of Divinity, and ultimately guardian or rector of the college, with Father John Colgan and Father Michael O'Clery, "began to devise means to rescue from the chances of threatened oblivion the perishing records and evidences of, at least, the ecclesiastical history of their native country." How they established an Irish press in St. Anthony's College, how Michael O'Clery went to Ireland to collect, purchase, or transcribe manuscripts, how he visited the Franciscan monasteries of this country, besides private libraries, and how, having accumulated his material, he retired to his monastery of Donegal and went to work upon them, is all related by O'Curry concisely and with simplicity. He goes on to explain that the collection of manuscripts at St. Isidore's is a large remainder of the materials from which were compiled the "Annals of the Four Masters," and urges the great desirability of bringing these manuscripts and also those of the Burgundian Collection at Brussels, to Dublin, even for a short time, in order that transcriptions might be made.

Some three years later, Dr. Todd examined these manuscripts, and wrote to Gilbert—

"Rome, Via della Croce, No. 41,

"March 11, 1862.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I have got full access to the St. Isidore manuscripts, but they contain much more than I shall be able to carry off or transcribe. There are amongst them: 1. The

Book of Hymns, which contains two or three Latin hymns not in the Dublin Manuscript. There is no gloss on the Latin hymns, but the Irish hymns have gloss and scholia or annotations much more copious than ours. The scholia on St. Fiac's hymn and on the hymns to St. Brigid are much more copious than in our manuscript, and extremely valuable and important. They are, in fact, the Irish material from which the extant Latin lives are compiled. This manuscript does not contain the Hymn of St. Patrick, published by Petrie in his 'Tara,' so that our copy of that is unique.

"2. I have found the 11 sheets of the Book of Leinster. They contain a complete copy of the 'Martyrology of Tallaght,' and some of the works of Aengus the Culdee. I would be very much obliged to you if you could send me as soon as you can a copy of Father Kelly's edition of the 'Mart. of Tallaght,' which I might collate with this manuscript, and so bring home a complete copy of it. Our copy is imperfect.

"3. A paper copy of Cormac's 'Glossary' (if I am not mistaken) wanting the first leaf.

"4. The 'Felire of Aengus,' with copious notes in Irish. This is the identical manuscript so often quoted by Colgan, under the title of 'Aengusius Auctus.'

"5. Two Irish lives of St. Columba, one of which is, I suspect, the original of O'Donnell's life.

"There are several other manuscripts of minor importance, but I must not omit to mention vol. 1 of the autograph of the Four Masters, and I am told that another vol. (whether the duplicate of vol. 1 or vol. 2) is in the Barberini Library. This I have not yet seen.

"The only way we shall ever get good from these manuscripts will be by sending O'Curry out to copy them. The journey from Dublin to Rome might be made for about £12, to £15, and a man might live here very well for about 10 scudi (about £2,) a week. Suppose we gave him £50, more for his trouble (which would be very small pay); the whole thing would cost £100, or say £150, and surely we ought to be able to raise that sum for such an object?

O'Curry's copies would be quite as useful to us, if not more so than the originals. Think of this, and consult Dean Graves about it.

"There is another thing I would like you to mention to the Councils of the R.I.A. and I.A.C.S., viz. the importance of placing a copy of the transactions of the Academy and publications of the Arch. and Celtic Soc. in some library here. I would suggest the Library of the Collegio Romano as being more central and more accessible than the Vatican, and also as that college is the most scientific body in Rome, and has a good observatory.

"If this be agreed to, you might manage to send them out before I leave Rome, and I will take care to have the books presented in the proper way and to see them put up in their places. I shall be here for at least a month or six weeks. There are frequent ships direct from Liverpool to Civita Vecchia, and the books might be sent at once directed to me to the care of M. Spithöver, bookseller, 80, Piazza de Spagna.

"Faithfully yours,

"J. H. TODD.

"J. T. Gilbert, Esq."

O'Curry could not undertake the journey, and on August 29, 1862, Dr. Todd wrote again—

"Thanks for your letter and the book, which arrived safely. I am sorry O'Curry cannot come, but perhaps he may think better of it. In no other way is there hope of our ever obtaining the manuscripts. The monks of St. Isidore consider themselves under an obligation not to part with them on any terms. They have already been greatly annoyed by some injudicious overtures made to them, and I am therefore very unwilling to speak to them on the subject. When Dr. Newman was in Dublin, he procured a permission from the Pope, authorizing the monks to part with the manuscripts with a view to their being deposited in the Stephen's Green University. But they considered themselves bound to refuse.

Under these circumstances I consider it hopeless to propose the purchase of the manuscripts.

“You suggest photography. This has occurred to me, but the state of the manuscripts renders this almost hopeless, and tracings *à fortiori* still more hopeless. Father Meehan, I believe, is very much dissatisfied with the tracing he has got. In short, our only hope is to get out O’Curry, for there is now nobody else who is competent, or whose transcripts are worth anything.

“I hope to collate the ‘Book of Hymns,’ and have already done so to some extent ; but this is all that I can do. I think I shall remain here for another month, so there will be time to arrange matters, if you can make any plan that will satisfy O’Curry.

“I was very glad to see the account of the giving of the medals in the *Daily Express*, and particularly glad to find your name and Stokes’ in the list of medallists. I should certainly have administered a gentle castigation to you on the manner in which you have printed your references to your authorities. However, the medal was well bestowed and richly deserved.

“I am not yet in a condition to send you any account of the St. Isidore Manuscripts, which you could read to the Academy. I am so anxious to get as much matter as possible for the completion of the ‘Book of Hymns,’ that I have done nothing else, in the hope of finishing the collation before I go away. The manuscript contains some Latin hymns not in ours, and there are considerable differences in the prefaces. The Latin hymns have no gloss. But the Irish hymns have a copious gloss and large scholia not in ours. These I am now transcribing, lest O’Curry should fail me. The consequence is that I have seen but little of Rome as yet. I have been, however, very much the better for my trip. The climate here seems to suit me. For the last two or three days I have had a cold and a little touch of sore throat, but this I attribute to the weather, which has been very oppressive, with a touch of scirocco, as the Italians call it.

"I will make the inquiry which Clibborn desires. May I ask you to send the enclosed to Haughton.

" Faithfully yours,

" J. H. TODD.

"Learning does not appear to be at a high ebb in Rome, and my friends the good friars of St. Isidore's seem rather below than above the ordinary level; nevertheless, they are most kind to me, nothing can exceed their anxiety to afford me every possible facility for consulting their manuscripts."

*From Rev. P. F. Moran, D.D.*<sup>1</sup>

"Rome, August 16, 1862.

"MY DEAR DR. TODD,

"I am sorry to have to tell you that there is no further hope for the present of having the Irish manuscripts of St. Isidore's brought to Ireland. This will, I am sure, surprise you. Everything seemed most happily arranged, and I was authorized, as well by Dr. Cullen<sup>2</sup> as by the Franciscan Provincial, to make application to Propaganda to obtain the permission of the authorities there. They told me there was no difficulty in the matter, and that it would be at once arranged. Every week I was in expectation of the answer, but to my dismay the answer which I at last received, a few days ago, was to the effect that the newly appointed General of the Franciscan Order sent a formal and written protest (which I read) declaring that he would not allow any houses of the Franciscan Order to part with the ancient documents which had been transmitted to them, and further prohibiting the manuscripts to be removed from the convent of St. Isidore's itself. This news will be mortifying to you, and I assure you it was exceedingly so to myself. Perhaps, however, the new Franciscan General did not understand how the matter stood, and that the Provincial could again make some move in the matter.

"I hope your journey homeward was as pleasant as you

<sup>1</sup> Now Cardinal Moran.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards Cardinal Cullen.



could desire, and that your inquiries for the Columban manuscripts in Milan were crowned with success.

“I have to ask a favour from you, of which I do not know, however, whether it is practicable or not: it is to procure for me a copy of the decrees of the Synod held in Dublin by Dr. Curwin in 1556. Dr. Mant refers to it in his first volume, p. 241, and refers for the decrees to ‘Loftus MS., Marsh’s Library.’ If it be permitted to have a copy made of this portion of the manuscript, you would confer a favour on me by procuring it, and I will at once pay the expenses of it.

“Our political world continues as agitated as ever in this quarter. Rome, however, is tranquil, and the people seem to become daily more attached to Pio Nono.

“Since I heard of the lamented death of the late Primate,<sup>1</sup> I have been looking out to see if perchance you might be promoted to that high dignity. At all events, wishing you every true blessing from God, I remain,

“Yours most devotedly,

“PATRICK F. MORAN.”

About ten years after this date the authorities of the Franciscan Order removed the manuscripts in question to their Convent, Merchants’ Quay, Dublin, fearing the seizure of these valuable documents by the Italian Government.

In 1861, Gilbert, in conjunction with John Edward Pigot, assisted O’Curry in the preparation for publication, in a volume, of his “Lectures on the Manuscript Materials of Ancient Irish History,” which were delivered under the auspices of Dr. John Henry Newman (afterwards Cardinal Newman) at the Catholic University during the sessions of 1855 and 1856. O’Curry hardly possessed the English literary culture necessary for successfully sending forth in this form the rare message he had to give to the world, and each of his lectures was carefully revised, and in some instances almost rewritten, by Pigot. Simultaneously with the issue of O’Curry’s volume Gilbert published in the *Dublin Review*

<sup>1</sup> Archbishop Beresford.

a series of papers on the "Ancient Irish Manuscripts," calling attention to the book ; and at the same time the two friends continued to assist the revered Irish scholar in putting his translations from the Irish into correct English form for a future work, his "Lectures on the Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish," afterwards edited by Dr. W. K. Sullivan.

On November 14, Pigot wrote to Gilbert—

"I had a note from Dr. Woodlock asking me at what cost an edition of your forthcoming article could be printed off before the types are distributed (if, as I suppose may be counted on, the *Review* folk will allow this to be done)."

And later—

"Some one had suggested a doubt to his mind whether the publication of the reprint from the *Review* might not rather hurt than serve the sale of the book ! This idea will, I suppose, prevent him from printing a large edition of your papers. I shall still express my opinion on this to him, notwithstanding his note, and what you mention in yours. It would be monstrous to allow you to be at a shilling expense about reprinting.

"The portion of translation you sent me, I suppose, must be fully half the entire. I read over this part last night. It would need, I think, a good deal of revision by O'Curry himself, and I believe also we should settle upon the style of translation to be adopted. I think, for example, that it ought to be free enough to be in good flowing English, and not baldly literal ; a translation, in short, such as Middleton would have made of Cicero ; not such as a schoolmaster working on the Hamiltonian system would construct—a translation accurate in every detail, but *not* of necessity verbally literal. For example, I totally disapprove of the style adopted twenty years ago for translation of those long strings of adjectives which (in the English especially) so much disfigure the 'Battle of Magh Rath.' And there are some very *luxuriant* specimens of these strings in the 'Táin-bó-Cúailgne.' I wish you would consider this, and afterwards talk over it with me, manuscript in hand.

“The historical and biographical and critical notes will certainly come best at the end of the book. And this plan will be attended with an advantage which I may, in *strict privacy*, hint to you!—namely, that we shall then insert our number references at every word and sentence we want noted, and so it will be impossible for O'Curry to avoid saying what he knows—or that he knows nothing—on each separate number, because it *must* have a note of some kind. Also notes can thus be obtained singulatim from other people—as, for instance, certain *topographical* notes, very many of which, I suspect, you will have to obtain from other authorities also—who can readily distinguish these notes by their initials, as was, if I remember rightly, done in the Nennius.

“What of inserting the prospectus in the *Dublin University Magazine*? I am almost sure if Lefanu's own attention were drawn to it, he would do so at once, out of friendly feeling to O'Curry.”

Three days later Pigot wrote—

“23, L' Fitzw<sup>m</sup> St., Dublin, Saturday, November 23.

“DEAR GILBERT,

“I have received all the rest of the translation, and I had a word with O'Curry to-day, who will rather prefer, I think, a freer translation, *if* no word of the original be omitted, a condition, of course, obviously indispensable.

“Let us have a talk over it, translation in hand. And for this purpose, if you are not engaged on Monday, what say you to come and dine with me? O'Curry will come. But he stipulates to meet an hour or more before, so as to have settled whatever occurs to us before dinner—prudent man! Therefore he will be with me before 5. What say you? If you can, try to come before 5 also; but even if not, then as early as may be. I need not, I think, make a stipulation against over *punning*, for I asked D. F. McC. also to join us at dinner, partly to put you down, and partly to vary the

τᾶν βό κύανζνε with some discussion upon the asonantes of Calderon.

“Yours ever truly,  
“J. E. PIGOT.”

In another note Pigot says—

“DEAR GILBERT,

“If you should pass by College before O’Curry’s hour knells (3 o’clock), go in for the fasciculus of τᾶν βό κύανζνε translation I leave with him. For convenience’ sake, I have written out all this first fasciculus, though I have so rarely altered it at all from O’Curry’s translation, that I think a good deal more will be required to make it read well in English. I have just done this much by way of example, as you desired, and when you have considered it and talked it over with Dr. Todd, we could, I think, easily settle finally how the thing is to be proceeded with.”

In June, 1861, Gilbert wrote to Dr. Lyons—

“Every one interested in Irish literature thinks that the Council of the Academy has done very wrongly in not recommending that the vacancy in the Committee of Antiquities should be filled by John O’Donovan, to whom we owe so much.

“I hope you will make it a point to come and give your vote for him at the election on Monday evening, as it will be disgraceful if he is not elected.”

Six months later, the death of O’Donovan, which occurred in December, 1861, caused profound grief to thoughtful Irishmen, and was deplored as a heavy loss by Celtic scholars all over the world. Rev. C. P. Meehan wrote to Gilbert—

“Lose no time in making a memoir of poor O’Donovan for the forthcoming magazine.<sup>1</sup> He was born in 1809. I wish *you* to do this for many reasons, which I’ll specify when we meet.”

Gilbert made use of the notes given him, as we have

<sup>1</sup> *Dublin Review*.



*John T. Gilbert*



seen, through J. C. O'Callaghan, some years before, by the lamented Irish scholar, and published the only memoir that has yet been written of O'Donovan ; also took a leading part in the movement to provide for his widow and children. The same letters which record the welcome given to Gilbert's essays on the " Ancient Irish Manuscripts " bewail the loss of the great Irish *brehon*.

" Many thanks," writes Rev. J. Graves, " for your review of Professor O'Curry's Lectures. I have read it with great pleasure, only to be surpassed by a perusal of the book itself. Thanks also for the index of the ' History of Dublin.' Alas, for our friend that is taken from us ! Alas, for the literature of the country he loved so well ! I cannot take in the full reality of this calamity. I cannot persuade myself that John O'Donovan, with all the rich stores of that noble, broad-grasping, unselfish intellect, is gone from amongst us for ever. I have lost a friend. I grieve for him as a brother. How much more you who have lived so much in his company. What a rich treat his forthcoming volume for the Irish Archæological and Celtic Society promised to be. Is any of the work done ? I fear little is written. He was very fond of writing up his treatises and notes *in proof*, a process that only his sterling notes were worth the cost of."

Rev. Thomas Barry writes—

" I am greatly obliged for your kind and thoughtful gift, the essay ' Ancient Irish Historical Manuscripts.' I have twice read it with the greatest interest and pleasure, and it now stands beside ' The History of Dublin,' ' The Historic Literature of Ireland,' and the ' Celtic Records,' valued like them for its intrinsic worth ; as well as for those other and peculiar claims in my regard it has in common with them—the productions of a scholar—a true patriot, and my dear friend.

" I am glad to know such exertions are being made for Dr. O'Donovan's family. I need not say that I will contribute the very largest donation my means admit—only sorry they cannot allow ten times the amount. It is a sin and a shame

that every Catholic in Ireland does not contribute. No better proof exists of our provincial degradation than the solitary facts: 1st, we are obliged to send round the hat to provide bread for O'Donovan's widow and orphans; 2nd, it will pass unnoticed the doors of Irish Catholics who spend hundreds to enrich Italian squallers and German fiddlers."

*From John Martin.*

"Kilbroney, Rostrevor, December, 18, 1861.

"DEAR MR. GILBERT,

"I have to thank you for your kind attention in sending me the article on O'Curry's book. I read it over last night with my pipe, and found it, like your book about Dublin, excellent for quality of matter, for simplicity of style, and for straightforward dash *in medias res*. But what a melancholy state of things your article shows to exist in Ireland! An ancient literature and history that any people but ours would proudly labour to conserve and cherish—that our people, above all others, ought jealously to guard, seeing that, robbed of their national independence, they have nothing of the present to boast of. And no encouragement from the nobles and rich men of Ireland for those who would devote their talents to such patriotic work as that. And only a few Irish scholars, and most of them old and soon to pass away, are now left for the work. Just think of the loss Ireland has suffered in the loss of O'Donovan, a loss irreparable! And how many men in Ireland of the rank and culture that ought to make them the patrons and friends of Irish learning care 'two rows of pins' about the death of O'Donovan? Most of them would rather give money to that poor creature of a secretary in aid of his fourth abomination of a Queen's College. Poor John O'Donovan! God rest his soul! Pardon me all this rant, and believe me, dear Mr. Gilbert,

"Ever sincerely yours,

"JOHN MARTIN."



*From Edward Clibborn.*

“Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, May 26, 1862.

“I saw O'Curry this morning and had some conversation with him on the chance of your finding a corner for him at the end of the month. And also as to the absolute necessity of the Brehon Laws Commission making this library one of the repositories of a copy of the transcript of the Brehon Laws. He states that a copy had been given to the Library, T.C.D., and that another copy had been bound and got ready to be sent to the British Museum. This is not sent. Could we not shoot it on the wing? or put in a claim to a copy before O'Curry's painter is cut? Surely the R.I.A., as the grand depository of *ould* Irish in all shapes and forms, should have a copy, and that at once. It will enable people to test the text now on its way. The whole work consists of 8 vols. transcribed by O'Donovan, and 9 vols. transcribed by O'Curry. Might not the matter be mentioned at the meeting this evening? It would take the Committee by surprise and lead the Council to make the request. If the College has a copy the Academy should have another, and that accessible to scholars, who might be able to review the work as it came into print.”

D. H. Kelly writes from Castle Kelly, Mount Talbot—

“Very many thanks for your interesting brochure. O'Curry's lectures are indeed a boon to the Irish scholar, and I, who have dabbled therein, am lost in wonder at the store of information, the depth of research, and the generally candid and philosophical tone pervading them. Perhaps, holding the chair he does, he could not avoid the few bits of polemics that he introduces; but they are but the patches on one of Sir Charles Grandison's Court Beauties, and possibly the very foiling adds to the feeling of truthfulness which pervades that precious volume.

“Alas, that O'Curry now stands alone in his glory! Oh,

what a loss literature has had in O'Donovan, and just as he was in the prime of his intellect, and public attention was beginning to value his labours as they ought! His loss is indeed irreparable. I know no one, not even O'Curry, able to take his place.

"I hope Wilde's treasure-trove letter will be widely circulated. Every police barrack should have a copy, and every clergyman of every denomination, as well as the country gentlemen recorded in Thom's Almanack."

Six or seven months after the death of O'Donovan, the national spirit of Ireland, and all Celtic workers and sympathizers throughout the world, were mourning for the death of O'Curry.

W. H. Hardinge wrote to Gilbert on July 30, 1862—

"I deeply deplore being your informant that the light of Israel is now all but gone.

"Our worthy, guileless, and great Irish scholar, O'Curry, passed away this morning almost unexpectedly and without, as I am told, a struggle. I went over to the Academy to Clibborn, but he was out, so I left a message. All that is right should be done in his case as in poor O'Donovan's. I understand that an inquest is about being held, and I wanted to be there, if the duties here would permit it. Perhaps you might have time to go. It would be proper that all respect should be shown the remains of so eminent a man."

Martin Haverly writes to Gilbert—

"I am grieved to the heart's core at the sorrowful news you have sent me this morning. It is indeed most harrowing and astounding news; and the loss of the friend grieves one infinitely more than that of the Celtic scholar. Poor O'Curry! His death will add to the anxious exertions which yourself and the very few others who take an interest in Irish literature had been involved in by the death of O'Donovan. I am grateful to you, my dear Gilbert, for your thoughtfulness and kindness in letting me know this sad piece of intelligence without delay. May God bless you!"

*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

“The Library, Armagh, July 31, 1862.

“Your telegram of yesterday conveyed to me the saddest piece of intelligence which I have received for many a day. This death is worse than O'Donovan's, for when he was removed 10s. in the pound was still available; but now, alas, there is nothing but total and irremediable insolvency! Poor Ireland, she has lost her last, her only brehon! Deeply do I mourn over the loss. O'Donovan and O'Curry gone, and Dr. Todd in poor health, and Whitley Stokes thousands of miles away; it seems to me as if a black curtain had fallen over the sunny scene and the lively movement which Irish literature presented a short time ago.

“Please God, I shall go to Dublin on Saturday by the early train, which arrives at 11 a.m. On my arrival I shall call for you. We cannot, without the president, do anything as a formal deputation from the Academy. I regret the loss of the Primate exceedingly, and I shall feel it more ways than one. But O'Curry's removal is a greater blow, because it entails an irreparable loss in the full extent of the word. How little did I imagine on Saturday, when writing about the Primate's funeral, and finding barely time to shake hands and say good-bye, that that farewell was to be the eternal finis to a voluminous intercourse. I am shocked, and cast down, and deeply grieved. Poor Eugene, poor hard-working, nature-taught son and ornament of Erin!

“The funeral, yesterday, was a wonderful demonstration. We can get plenty of Primates, but where can we find another O'Curry?”

After O'Curry's death a rivalry arose between the Royal Irish Academy and the Catholic University as to the future ownership of the papers left by the Irish scholar, and a fund on both sides was opened with a view to purchasing them. The following announcement was made by the Academy:—

## "EUGENE O'CURRY.

"Royal Irish Academy House, August 13, 1862.

"It being understood that the late lamented Professor O'Curry has left transcripts, etc., of various Gaelic documents, now to be disposed of, the following Noblemen and Gentlemen, desirous to benefit Professor O'Curry's family, and to secure the perpetual preservation of his Papers with those of his fellow-labourer, Dr. John O'Donovan, already in the Library of the Royal Irish Academy, have expressed their willingness to contribute to a Fund for those objects, in such form as may be decided upon by the Committee of Antiquities of this Academy, in conjunction with the Council of the Irish Archæological and Celtic Society, at whose disposal a Member of the Academy has liberally offered to place a considerable amount towards the above desirable purposes."

John Edward Pigot, who was earnestly desirous of securing the Manuscripts for the Catholic University, wrote to Gilbert, August 4, 1862—

"I had an answer from Reeves this morning, desiring to be excused from acting as one of the secretaries. . . . We concluded to ask Dr. Todd to act with one colleague, selecting for that colleague Lyons. We shall have done our best to secure the complexion as well as co-operation poor O'Curry would have himself sought, and we can do no more.

"Lyons and I saw the family yesterday, as well as Anthony O'Curry. He arranged with these that all the manuscripts and books should be entrusted to Dr. Todd, Sullivan, Lyons, and myself to determine the negotiations for disposing of them to the best advantage. Of course we *must* so dispose of them, that is, to whoever or whatever body will give the most for them. I have mentioned this to Clibborn, that it might be stated at once to Todd.

"Sullivan and I called on Mgr. Woodlock to talk over the plan of educating the boys. He on the whole suggests the French College at Williamstown (Blackrock): he is to

write to the Principal there to-night, and Sullivan and I shall call there to inquire into the place on Wednesday, when Sullivan comes into town. Do you know anything of the place or of the people there? We have a very good report of it. Dr. Woodlock will, of course, gladly act on a committee, and subscribes £20, to the fund for the family—which is, I think, liberal.”

On the same date Rev. Dr. Reeves wrote to Gilbert—

“Pigot, in stating the likely sum left by O'Curry, mentioned to me only £300, insurance, and about £100, salary due. But I mentioned to him that surely, in making an appeal, the estimated value of his manuscripts should not be omitted, and that in a rough way I would name £300, for them; so that £700, instead of £400, should go before the public, unless, indeed, it was contemplated to make over the manuscripts to some public institution like the Academy, as a kind of consideration to the public for their response to the appeal, in which case the said intention should be set forth in the appeal. But if the family intended to make the manuscripts a subject for the hammer or a private sale, that the estimated value should not be held back in stating O'Curry's pecuniary remains. . . . In my opinion, the Academy would be the proper place of deposit, where O'Curry's dictionary materials would be side by side with O'Donovan's. I mentioned the reasons why I supposed the £300 an approximate value, namely, that I believe his transcripts to be mostly from public manuscripts in T.C.D. and R.I.A., and that as regarded the dictionary materials, I believed that the master-key to their opening being gone, they had lost much of their value. To use John D'Alton's words, 'The ship gone down, and little more than the bill of lading remaining.' It is well that an exorbitant value should not be placed on these undigested jottings down, for in their present state they can be nothing more. But should the course which the family and functionaries of the Catholic University may adopt result in developing more value than I suppose, or expedite the realization of our Celtic dictionary hopes, I am sure I, for one, will

most heartily rejoice ; (only let not the fact that they are to be manipulated be lost sight of ;), and say if O'Curry's literary remains are to be deposited in a close institution which can afford to offer a higher price for the reliques than a national society or the public purse on behalf of that open and liberal depository. I hope you will approve of my views of these matters."

On the next day Gilbert wrote—

"MY DEAR REEVES,

"Nothing could be better than your letter on the O'Curry affairs, and the views you express are those which I am sure will be taken by Dr. Todd ; for my part, I coincide with them thoroughly. Pigot called on me to-day, and gave me your letter to him to read, and after a long talk I told him plainly, but in a friendly way, that I considered myself bound in honour to the Academy, and that if the decision were left solely in my hands between it and the Catholic University, I should unhesitatingly declare for the Academy."

On the same day came the following from Rev. Dr. Todd:—

"MY DEAR GILBERT,

"A strong effort must be made to secure O'Curry's Glossarial collections, and to publish them with O'Donovan's just as they are. Upon them we must stand, if we would push our Irish publications much further. The editing of them will be a good school in which to educate a couple of young Irish scholars.

"Faithfully yours,

"J. H. TODD."

Later Rev. Dr. Todd wrote—

"I have written my statement of the negotiations for the O'Curry Manuscripts, and sent it to Mr. Haliday for his approval. I think it very desirable to avoid anything like a dispute or quarrel with the other party."

On August 13, 1862, Rev. Dr. Reeves writes to Gilbert—

“I hope that a vigorous move, such as you have initiated on a broad archæological basis, may have the result of superintending any minor or less comprehensive proceeding in the matter of the O'Curry fund or the appropriation of his literary remains. I would, for my part, infinitely rather embark in an undertaking such as you propose than in one less Catholic, though perhaps having stronger claims to the title.

“I had a letter from Dr. Todd yesterday. He repeats my sentiment that O'Curry's death is more to be deplored than the aged Primate's. When O'Curry and O'Donovan or either was to the fore, there was an oracle to consult in a difficulty; and a man might tread with confidence, but now the way is dark and slippery. A new generation must be raised up, the materials for it must be sought in the rough quarry whence the great two were hewn. College men will never do: they will fly off at a tangent when professional attractions open to their view. Youthful peasants whose mother-tongue is Irish are the class among whom the future brehon must be sought in embryo.

“As usual, you have given a generous response to my bibliographical cravings. I am truly obliged to you, and all I can do in return is to work *pro bono Hiberno-Archæologico*. I intend to ask the Librarian of the Academy on Monday for the loan of some ‘Acta Sanctorum’ volumes, as I require their aid in my Martyrological work. Oh how I mourn over my folly in omitting to possess myself of Dr. Elrington's copy of the Bollandists when George Smith offered them to me for £100! What grouting they would make for my shelves instead of the ‘Acta Diabolorum’ of mercenary politicians, to which I am driven as a stop-gap.

“I hope something may be done to secure Crowe's services. He is clever and well grounded, and I agree with you that a man who can manipulate the Leabhar-na-h'Uidhri ought to be able for less ponderous work, only he may set too high a price upon his abilities, and caw when a more dulcet note would be more satisfactory.”

About the same time Rev. Dr. Reeves wrote—

“I received a note from Pigot a few days ago saying that a provisional committee had been named to conduct the movement for the O’Curry fund, and that my name was included, also that yours was on the list. I am content to be embarked with you in the matter, and I know that you will do all in your power to watch for the interests of the Academy, or rather the literary cause of which the Academy is the natural and most liberal guardian, without prejudice to the orphan family. The proposed trustees on Pigot’s tentative list are Lord Talbot, the Chief Baron (Pigot), and Dr. Todd—a most unexceptionable combination. I hope and trust the matter will be worked on a good broad basis, as in O’Donovan’s case, without tincture of party feeling or narrow interest. I am longing to hear of the arrival of the St. Isidore books, and if they are to be made the subject of a purchase for the Academy, I shall be delighted to be a subscriber to the best of my ability. At all events, I expect you will have a good deal to tell me when we meet, and a fair share of what is encouraging.”

Other excerpts from the numerous letters of the Rev. Dr. Reeves to Gilbert in this year are interesting—

“I have been thinking over the matter of the proposed contents of the dictionary volume, and I think that such items as you propose would be ample for one issue. I suppose you could print the Cormac’s Glossary with the Irish inter-paged. If so, would you take Stokes’ (I suppose) immaculate text, or, would you transfer O’Donovan’s rendering of it? I suppose his notes would accompany this. O’Donovan’s supplemental words in his ‘O’Reilly’ will run to a considerable length, because he always quotes the passage whence he derives his word. The ordnance volume glosses will be useful for topographical inquiry. I think it possible that among his papers may be found some materials for extending the volume. I think that everything of an ethnological character which you met with in his remains might be advantageously introduced. And thus you will have a right portly volume. If space permits, I think MacFirbis’



exceedingly rare glossary should be included. O'Curry used to find very useful revelations in it.

"There are some strange statements from time to time in the papers relative to the O'Curry Manuscripts. I am told that it was asserted that a gentleman connected with the Academy had offered £1500, for the collection! Is this Charles Haliday? If so, where is his discretion gone? Or does he know of some pearls of great price being concealed in that literary field? The martyrology is going on. . . . I have ascertained that the red circles are on the maps of 1609. I remember stating that I did not believe they were raths or earthen forts, because, if they were, the townland names on which they stand would, in some cases at least, indicate by their composition an element of fortifications, and have 'dun,' 'rath,' 'lis,' or some such Irish term in their composition, which they have not. They are the *barrens*, as I conjectured, of the undertakers, and this I have tested by the patents of James I. and by Pynnar's Survey.

"I send by this post the 'Potutus elegantissimus' to Clibborn. It contains the autographs of his Grace of Armagh, his Celebrity of the Observatory, and his Humility of the Library. It would have gone by yesterday's post but that the Primate had gone to visit Lord Gosford. I had a very agreeable interview with him to-day, and we had much conversation on the subject of O'Donovan, the Academy, hagiology, and his own beautiful bronze swords, with his two holy bells, one of them St. Mogue's."

*From Rev. G. H. Forbes.*

"Burntisland, November 5, 1862.

"I enclose a couple of lists of the few works we have printed here, and I shall have much pleasure in forwarding any of them to you. Although the 'Missal of Arbuthnot' is only printed for subscribers, yet, as it has been some time at press, some of these have died, so that I shall probably have one or two copies at liberty. It will contain much curious and invaluable information about the old Irish

liturgies, and will, I hope, be followed by the reprint of several other liturgical texts, of which the Pontifical of D. de Bernham, Archbishop of S. Andrew's, is now in hand.

"I should be very thankful for any information you can furnish me with respecting the Irish Manuscripts of native rituals. The close connection between Scotland and Ireland makes me wish to learn more about them, in hopes of being able at some future time to take them up also."

*From William F. Skene, D.C.L., LL.D.*

“Edinburgh.

"I have been engaged for the last two years in putting into shape the results of my researches into the early history of Scotland in a work called 'Celtic Scotland,' two volumes of which have already appeared. The first volume deals with History and Ethnology, the second Church and Culture, and the third, upon which I am now engaged, will deal with Land and People. The facsimile of the 'Leabhar Breac' came very *apropos*, as it enabled me to add to the second volume a translation which Mr. Hennessy kindly made for me of the old Irish life of St. Columba in the 'Leabhar Breac.' I learnt afterwards that Mr. Whitley Stokes has translated the same Life, but as it is privately printed, it is inaccessible to me. By the way, I think I can show who the author of this Life was. Is there any hope of the Royal Irish Academy giving us a facsimile of the 'Book of Armagh'? I am afraid it is hopeless now to look for Dr. Reeves' long-promised edition; but a facsimile of this, in my opinion one of the most interesting and valuable manuscripts you have, would be an immense boon. I am glad that you have returned to Ireland in better health."

In February, 1862, the President of the Royal Irish Academy wrote:—

“Common Room, Trinity College, Dublin.

“MY DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“The medals are to be presented on the 15th of March, Lord Carlisle attending. Would you kindly give me

a few notes, so that I may say the most important things respecting the sources, the plan, and the execution of the 'History of Dublin.' In particular I would wish to notice the parts in which there is most evidence of original research, or where current errors have been corrected. Your kind wish to help me in the performance of my duty and to facilitate my labours will, I trust, preponderate over the natural modesty which would render you indisposed to say anything about yourself and your work.

"Yours faithfully,

"CHARLES GRAVES."

ADDRESS DELIVERED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE  
ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY, DUBLIN,

*At the General Meeting of the Academy, on March 16, 1862.*

GENTLEMEN,—One of the most important prerogatives and duties belonging to the Council of this Academy is the award of medals to the successful cultivators of those scientific and literary pursuits for the promotion of which the Academy was founded. We are now assembled for the purpose of carrying into effect resolutions adopted by the Council with reference to this matter towards the close of the past year; and to give greater solemnity to our proceedings, the Representative of the Queen has been pleased to honour our meeting with his presence.

The Cunningham Gold Medal has been awarded to Mr. John T. Gilbert for his "History of the City of Dublin." In undertaking this history, Mr. Gilbert engaged in a task, the interest of which was equalled by its difficulty. In general, the historian derives help, in the execution of his work, from the labours of writers who have preceded him. Though they may have left omissions to be supplied, and mistakes to be corrected, they have, at least, furnished a mass of authentic matter, the possession of which places him in a position more advantageous than that of writers who have to construct their narratives out of the crude materials gathered from primary sources, annals, laws, charters, and the incidental notices preserved in ancient documents and monuments of various kinds. But Mr. Gilbert owes nothing to earlier histories of Dublin. The first work on the subject was the imperfect attempt of Harris, published, in a small volume,

most inaccurately, after his death, in 1766. On this it would be unfair to pronounce a severe criticism. The design of the author had been left very incomplete, and the office of attempting to fill the outline which he had traced was committed to an incompetent compiler. So limited in extent was this small history of the city of Dublin, that but four pages of it were devoted to the description of St. Patrick's Cathedral and eighteen churches. The entire of Harris's imperfect and inaccurate little work was appropriated and reprinted *verbatim*, without any acknowledgment, in 1818, at London, by Whitelaw and Walsh, whose compilation is full of the most absurd errors. Some of the materials of their work were avowedly gathered from unsubstantiated oral communications, others were taken from printed guide-books of no authority. For instance, the Annals of Dublin, from 1704, the period at which Harris ended, were reprinted without alteration from the concluding pages of a Dublin Almanac. Without exposing ourselves to the reproach of an undue civic vanity, we may assert that Dublin deserved to be made the subject of a history more elaborate and more authentic than the works of either Harris or Whitelaw and Walsh. The metropolis of Ireland possesses trustworthy annals which reach back for more than a thousand years, and has been the scene on which most famous men, Irish, Danes, Anglo-Normans, and English, have played their parts. A writer conscious of the dignity of his subject, and anxious to do it justice, would feel that very extensive researches should be made previous to commencing a history of Dublin. He would see the necessity of examining every printed book, pamphlet, or tract referring to events connected with the history of the city. He would understand the importance of investigating the charters and deeds of its churches, guilds, and corporations, together with the manuscripts in the libraries of Trinity College and the British Museum, the archives of the State Paper Office, and the unpublished records of the Law Courts of Dublin; he would also make himself familiar with its streets, its public buildings, and its monuments. It is because Mr. Gilbert has given proofs of having used diligence and judgment in the collection of his materials from a vast variety of recondite sources, that his work has secured the approval of those who think that scientific accuracy is an essential element of literary excellence. Excluding uncertain or unverified statements, and abstaining from conjectures, he has founded his history solely on documentary evidence, the elaborately minute references to which, at the end of each volume, attest his industry and good faith. The writer of a work

constructed on the plan of Mr. Gilbert's "History of Dublin" has occasion to display the most diversified information and research. He touches upon the general political history of the country in past centuries; he introduces biographical notices of distinguished men; he records and localizes interesting events in the history of religion, letters, science, and art. In each of these departments the reader will find in Mr. Gilbert's History new and precise information, not to be met with elsewhere in print. As illustrating the wide range of subjects treated of under their respective localities, I may cite the account of the Tribe of MacGillamocholmog (vol. i., p. 230), traced through unpublished Gaelic and Anglo-Irish records from the remote origin of the family to its extinction in the fifteenth century; while, as a specimen of the work in a totally different department, I may refer to the history of Crow-street Theatre, as giving the only accurate details hitherto published of that once-noted establishment, verified by original documents never before printed, from the autograph of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and other dramatic celebrities. Mr. Gilbert has interwoven in his work numerous original biographies of eminent natives of Dublin. He has supplied notices of painters, engravers, and medallists, with catalogues of their works, never before collected, and not to be found even in books specially treating of these subjects. He has given us a history of the Parliament of Ireland and the Parliament House; he has recorded the origin and progress of the Royal Dublin Society, the College of Physicians, and the Royal Irish Academy; he has also introduced notices of remarkable literary works published in Dublin, with information respecting their authors. A complete analysis of Mr. Gilbert's volumes would bring into view other interesting classes of subjects which I have left unmentioned; but my enumeration of the topics treated of in the work is sufficiently ample to show that it embraces a most extensive field. To combine such multifarious details into a narrative attractive to a general reader, and at the same time satisfactory to the historical inquirer, seeking precise and authentic information, was not an easy task. Mr. Gilbert is acknowledged to have succeeded eminently in attaining this twofold object. He has produced a work which has been, and will continue to be, read with interest, and referred to as an authority, not only by partial friends and brother Academicians, but by all who may, in our own time or in future generations, study the history and antiquities of the city of Dublin.

On presenting the Medal, the President said—

MR. GILBERT,—I present to you the medal which the Council

of the Royal Irish Academy has awarded to you as the author of a scholarlike work on the History of Dublin. You have removed from Ireland the national reproach of having no history of its Metropolis. The volumes which you have produced furnish accurate and copious information on the history of every part of the city of which they treat. Let me express the hope that the sympathy in your labours shown by this Academy will encourage you to continue them. To the exertions made by you and our late President, Dr. J. H. Todd, as Honorary Secretaries of the Irish Archæological and Celtic Society, it is mainly owing that the latter body has been, for many years past, enabled to continue its labours in publishing various works of the utmost importance on the history of Ireland. You have proved your zeal in the cause of Irish history; you are acquainted with its sources and its materials. We have, therefore, good reason to indulge the hope that you will supply some of its many and acknowledged wants.<sup>1</sup>

*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

“ I send my Culdee fasciculus to you. It is not polished off, but it is sufficiently prepared to serve as a standard of the length and nature of the paper. . . . A good deal of the matter in the Appendix has never been printed, but in the Scotch portion the principal extracts are from works printed by the Bannatyne Club, which, though well known in Scotland, are unknown comparatively in this country, Dean Butler’s set of the Chartularies being the only copies in all Ireland. The abstracts from these books are necessary to the argument, but being condensed, and accompanied with my notes, they are to a certain extent original. I am anxious that my essay should be a final one on the subject, and, to this end, that all the scattered evidence should be brought together into one body.” (Three days later.)—“ Thanks for your kind offices in the matter of the Culdee paper. As soon as I have weighed the matter I shall have some consultation with you. Can you come to Armagh on next Saturday week? A mouthful of Ultonian air will do you good.”

<sup>1</sup> *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol. viii., pp. 101-104.

*From the Same.*

“As I was leaving town I carried away the parcel you left for me, and, to beguile time in the train, I opened it, and, to my surprise, found the famous ‘Opuscula S. P.’ included. I cannot tell you how much I am obliged to you for this very valuable gift, and, above all, for the very thoughtful and self-denying way in which you have taken my commission to be on the look-out for the book. I am sorry for one thing, which is the subtraction of it from your choice library, for I know how hard it is often to fill up a blank, even though of a small book. But bearing in mind your love of books, and especially the gems of Irish letters, I cannot but feel that the sacrifice indicates an amount of friendship which I duly prize. Jack<sup>1</sup> and Fanny cannot write to return their thanks, but they bid me give their thanks to good Mr. Gilbert. I also return my grateful acknowledgments for the Interleaved Poems. I write in great haste to catch the *poste volante*, so excuse a rough scribble and hasty but sincere sentiments.”

*From the Same.*

“Start at 8.30 a.m., and have some time on that day to look about you. You have not only to make a fair acquaintance with the books, but you must see the Navan and the spot where Marshal Bagenal fell; and though the objects of interest are not so numerous as at Oxford, still you must avoid everything like an approach to so confused a picture as Verdant Green’s ‘Serisorium,’ presented to him on the evening of his ‘doing the guide-book’ at that city.”

*From Rev. James Graves.*

“I have not yet seen poor O’Donovan’s *last* work, the ‘Topographical Poems.’ By all means send me the Academy’s

<sup>1</sup> In a kind note to the biographer, the late Colonel John Reeves speaks of his delight as a small boy at receiving a copy of “Robinson Crusoe” from his father’s friend.

notice to 'finders of Articles of Antiquity in Ireland,' and it shall have a place in the forthcoming number of our Journal. . . . Dr. Reeves mentioned some time ago that Dr. Todd had opened out a regular gold-mine at St. Isidore's, and that steps were taken to have copies made. What is doing, can you tell me? Also tell me, if you can, what has been done to supply O'Donovan's place on the Brehon Laws Commission? I hope some one will be appointed capable of continuing the work, and that no jobbery will be perpetrated."

*From the Same.*

"I am sorry to hear of jobbery creeping into the Brehon Laws Commission. Surely my namesake, or Todd, would never consent to any such thing. Then there are Lord Dunraven and Lord Talbot de Malahide, if I mistake not, on the Commission, whose names ought to be a warrant against any such thing. . . . Alas, that O'Donovan should be so soon forgotten!"

*From H. A. Prim.*

"Kilkenny.

"May I ask you to add my mite to the fund for the family of poor Dr. O'Donovan, whose death I look upon as the greatest misfortune Ireland has sustained within the last century at least."

Dr. Wilde writes—

"I saw Sir Bernard Burke at the *levée* to-day, who *attacked* me for not having retained his and Lord Farnham's name upon the O'Donovan committee. He had sent us a message by Mr. Edmond O'Donovan, son of our late friend, stating what he and Lord Farnham intended to do in the matter. I have written to G. O.'D. to call and explain the matter to you to-morrow morning. Sir B. B. also stated that he was pressing forward the memorial for the Pension. We should, I think, summon our committee at least once a week, and you are most welcome to meet here."



*From W. H. Hardinge.*

“Landed Estates Record Office, Dublin, March, 1862.

“It is cheering to see a Librarian of the Royal Irish Academy, and one so competent also, take such an interest in ascertaining the nature and value of the jewels in his charge, and exerting his talents in arranging and making them acceptable to all who may consult them.

“This used not to be the case, and you will excuse the novelty forcing this expression of my feelings from me.

“The manuscript you sent me of the capitulation articles for the surrender of Irish towns, and other curious remembrances of the period of the Commonwealth of England relating to this country, was very agreeable to my eyes, as no matter when, where, or from whom that manuscript was obtained, it is, so far as it goes, a transcript of a volume of the Committee or Commonwealth of the Parliament of England for the affairs of Ireland, which, after the Restoration of Charles the Second, came, with other interesting volumes of this celebrated printer, to the possession of the Auditor-General of the Court of Exchequer, and, after the abolishment of that office, passing through sundry other custodies, is now in my custody in this office, together with all other the Auditor's records. Our loose transcript relating to Innis Buffyn will be found in its proper page (100) of the manuscripts. I have carefully collated the manuscript with the original volume, and find many important and most interesting omissions, the particulars of which I enclose on a separate slip. . . . The manuscript was made some 40 or 50 years ago by my brother, who was engaged under the Irish Record Commission . . . and by right should have been found amongst the unpublished manuscript papers left by that Commission, and remaining deposited at the Record Tower, Lower Castle Yard, in the custody of Sir Bernard Burke. How it escaped from that depository is a marvel to me, but I rejoice to find that, after its peregrinations, it has

at last arrived at a Rest where the public may consult it, and also rest satisfied of its future security."

*From Dr. Wilde.*

"The R. C. Bishop of Clonfert, Dr. Derry, has sent me the piece of gold referred to in his former letter . . . a fragment of an armilla, perfect at one end but rudely cut off at the other, and I think the incision and hammering in that portion is antient. I would have bound up Parts I. and II. of the Catalogue long ago could I have first attained two objects—procured from Clibborn and from the publishers an *account*, and have got in the woodcuts of iron and silver still remaining with Oldham."

*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

"The Vicarage, Lusk, 1862.

"I have just received your letter, and hasten to say in reply that I will be happy to go on Monday to Mrs. O'Donovan's to examine and take charge of the doctor's manuscripts and annotated books. I will write to the widow by this post to prepare her for the visit. I think it will be well for you to meet me at the house. Dr. Todd and I had a conversation about O'Donovan's copy of Colgan, and his opinion was that £25, might advantageously be put upon the work as a price. Thereupon I wrote to Armagh, and I am authorized by the Most Rev. Primate to offer that sum in his name in order to it being added to the collection of the Armagh Library. I think W. E. Hudson paid about £22, for it. My noble copy cost £24. So that I think £25 is a very liberal price for O'Donovan's copy, which is a rather *rusty* one."

The following to Gilbert is from a well-remembered Irish patriot and poet :—

*From Thomas D'Arcy McGee.*

“Quebec, August 16, 1862.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“Your note of the 31st of July with the sad news of our venerable and matchless friend O'Curry's death, reached me a day or two after I had learned the sad news from another source. I hope to carry out successfully my project of a lecture for the O'Donovan fund, which miscarried last spring through an untimely storm. Pray accept my most sincere thanks for your valuable articles on O'Donovan's life and O'Curry's book. It is some consolation to a devotee of everything Irish like myself to know that there are still left some men in Ireland capable of continuing the work of those devoted scholars. It grieves one to think how little this generation seems to understand its true interests in our native land; but the unparalleled self-sacrifice of a few gifted men will make them a History, in spite of the present malign influences. . . .

“Very truly your obliged and obedient

“THOMAS D'ARCY MCGEE.”

Among his other undertakings of the year 1862, Gilbert wrote for “Chambers' Encyclopædia” two articles, on the early history and state of Ireland, and on the Irish language and literature, at the suggestion of his friend Rev. Dr. Reeves.

*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

“The Library, Armagh, October 17, 1862.

“The enclosed note was sent to me by Joseph Robertson, of the General Register House, Edinburgh. I mentioned to him that I had a friend in Dublin who could execute the work in a masterly manner, if he could be persuaded to take it in hands. In writing to you I now fulfil the promise of applying to that friend, who, I hope, will rescue our national credit from the hands of some rough and ignorant adventurers. You have taste and judgment and knowledge to give grace and solidity to the subject.”

*From A. Findlater, Editor of "Chambers' Encyclopædia."*

"339, High Street, Edinburgh, October 31, 1862.

"What is wanted is a sketch of the early history of Ireland to form part of the general article on that country, and a notice of the Irish language and literature to form a separate article. The history should embrace the chief points considered by learned inquirers to be established, regarding the ethnology of the early inhabitants, their condition, the introduction of Christianity, the aggressions and colonizations by the Northmen and by the English, etc., continued down to the reign of James I., when the history of the country falls into the current of that of the United Kingdom. As to the Irish language (Celtic), it should be taken up at the point where it is left in the article 'Celtic Nations' (of which a copy is herewith sent), and such characteristics given as would be interesting to a student of comparative philology who had no special acquaintance with Irish. The extent to which it is still spoken and written should be noticed. In regard to the literature, the chief books and documents should be noted and briefly characterized."

*From the Same.*

"339, High Street, Edinburgh, November 4.

"I am glad you have undertaken to write on Irish antiquities and language, etc. If there are any serious inaccuracies in the Irish portion of the article on 'Celtic Nations,' all that can be done is to correct them in the stereotype plate for any future impression that may be needed. I am sorry we had not your assistance regarding Dublin."

*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

“The Library, Armagh, October 27, 1862.

“I hope to be in Dublin on Monday next. . . It seems to me an age since we were assembled in Dawson Street. I received yours of the 18th telling me of your doings at the committee meeting. Haliday deserves all credit and the best thanks of all well-wishers to Irish literature, but I suppose that £5000 would not have bought the O’Curry papers, so determined were the Catholic literati to secure them. How they will doctor up the matter I know not, but one thing is certain, they have effectually frustrated any successful effort to benefit O’Curry’s family by a public appeal. There was an article on the subject in the *Dublin Evening Mail* of Saturday, and it is quite clear that the matter is not likely to pass by *sub silentio*. I wish poor Anthony O’Curry had had the courage at the start to assert and exercise his powers as executor, and open a fair field for competition.”

*From Rev. C. P. Meehan.*

“Be kind enough to let me know by *this day’s post*, does the ‘Liber Breac’ contain a Litany, or anything like a Litany of the B.V.M.? Dr. C. and Dr. M. quote the ‘Lib. Breac,’ and state that O’Curry found it there.”

*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

“The Library, Armagh, January 1, 1863.

“We Protestants of the North are wont to call the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, our Propaganda, the S.P.G. for brevity’s sake. Though you are not a member of it, I heartily wish you and yours to be partakers of the S.P.G. in the form of *Salus, Pax, Gratiæ*, for 1863, and *in Sæcula*.

“I return you Pigot’s letter. He comes too late in my

humble opinion, and it would be injurious and suicidal as regards our glossarial being to alter the arrangements that have been entered on. What signifies £200, in cash, if it becomes two hundred tons in weight upon the shoulders of energy and progress?

“A dead lock is to be avoided, and therefore I say, give me struggling but healthy poverty, rather than the riches which paralyze exertion. I need say no more as to my vote in the question.”

In 1863 Gilbert made an attempt to interest Government in the publication of a collection of original documents illustrative of the history of Dublin from the eleventh to the sixteenth century; but this he failed to accomplish.

The following is a copy of the letter on the subject received by him from the Master of the Rolls in England:—

“Rolls House [London], July 20, 1863.

“SIR,

“After carefully considering your letter I am apprehensive that unless you can give a more extended scope to the documents you propose to edit, the proposed work would be too much of a local character and not sufficiently historical for the purpose for which the Government Grant is made.

“Mr. Riley’s work to which you refer (as somewhat analogous to that you propose) although bearing upon the history of London proper, was undertaken solely with a view of illustrating the History of Trade, Commerce and Secular Guilds, and he was scrupulously guarded from wandering into so wide a field as a compilation of documents bearing merely on History of London, otherwise his work would have extended to dimensions far beyond what would have been considered suitable to the plan approved by the Government. Having considered Mr. Riley’s work had dealt with this particular subject at sufficient length I felt it necessary to bring it to a close, although a great mass of additional

documents relative to the same subject exists which Mr. Riley was desirous to edit. The Parliamentary Grant was given for the purpose of publishing chronicles and memorials illustrative of general history and not of any particular places or subjects unless bearing upon general history such as Education, Commerce, Science, and Law, avoiding as much as possible any distinct class such as Topography or mere Antiquarianism. If you could obtain materials tending to the elucidation of these subjects, particularly as relating to Ireland, I should be very glad to give further consideration to your proposition. But the documents contained in your list, though valuable enough, so far as the City of Dublin and its history are concerned, seem scarcely of sufficient national importance considering them as regards a History of Ireland alone to interest the public generally, and they seem more properly to belong to the appendix to the three volumes of the History of Dublin which you have already published.

“ I am your obedt. servt.,

“ JOHN ROMILLY.

“ J. T. Gilbert, Esqr.”

## CHAPTER VII

1863-1866

“Record Revelations by an Irish Archivist”—Commission of Inquiry—  
Member of the Royal Dublin Society—History of the Viceroys of  
Ireland—Letters.

IN 1863 Gilbert published the “Record Revelations by an Irish Archivist.” The “Revelations” appeared first in a series of papers in the *Dublin Review*, which were reprinted in form of a pamphlet, and in 1864 the whole, revised and enlarged, was issued in a volume, under the title of “On the History, Position, and Treatment of the Public Records of Ireland.” The matter of the publication was of the greatest interest to all engaged in work requiring accuracy in the treatment of historical records. The motto of the book was as follows:—

“Truth is to be sought only by slow and painful progress :  
error is in its nature flippant and compendious ; it hops, with  
airy and fastidious levity, over proofs and arguments, and  
perches upon assertion, which it calls conclusion.

“JOHN PHILPOT CURRAN,

“*Master of the Rolls of Ireland.*”

In his preface “the Archivist” writes—

“The interest with which these treatises were received,  
the exhaustion of the first edition, and the appearance of a  
third defective Calendar, at the public expense, from the  
source whence emanated the two volumes here analyzed, have



led to the present republication, with a view of placing permanently before the world an exposition of the Record System sought to be imposed on Ireland, in opposition to the protest and disapprobation of every Irish Archivist. . . . The details in the ensuing pages connected with the Irish Archives may be serviceable in guiding the public respecting the steps proper to be taken with reference to the promised Governmental concentration of the Records in a general Repository at Dublin, in the construction and arrangement of which an attempt appears to have been projected to maintain the discreditable system developed in the so-called Calendars of Patent and Close Rolls of Chancery in Ireland.

"On the proper organization and competent management of this general Record Repository must mainly depend the future usefulness of the Public Muniments of this part of the Empire ; and until this concentration has been effected in the most complete and scientific manner, under skilful Archivists, all attempts at the production of Calendars must be imperfect and misleading. Such was the case of Calendars of Rolls published in England early in the present century, which, since the completion of proper Record arrangements, have been superseded by works superior in completeness and accuracy.

"The interests involved in this matter are not solely historical or antiquarian. They concern a vast number of individuals connected with Great Britain as well as Ireland, by birth or property. Five-sixths of the surface of Ireland having at various periods passed from the Crown to the subject, it is to the records of such grants and the collateral evidence, extant among our ancient muniments, that inquirers must direct their researches in cases of property and title.

"Regarding the question from a literary point of view, it becomes apparent that, until the Irish Records have been made available, we shall have in vain to expect an accurate or reliable history of Great Britain and Ireland. On this

point Mr. H. C. Hamilton, in his preface to a Calendar published in 1860 by the authority of the Treasury, under the direction of the Master of the Rolls in England, correctly observes—

“ ‘The history of the inhabitants of the whole of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland is, and always has been, from the earliest times, so intimately connected, that it is impossible to study the progress of any one portion without that of the rest ; but still the details of the great events and leading historical catastrophes of several of the grander sections of the Empire are so diffuse and extensive that they are well classed and studied in separate divisions of the same whole.’

“ During the last twenty years many scholars, who by special studies had qualified themselves to edit the Anglo-Irish Records, were allowed to pass away unappreciated by Government, and it required strong devotion to maintain a worthy succession in a field so unproductive of substantial recognition. That the true spirit of learning has survived even such discouragements in Ireland is evinced by the fact that the exertions of a few individuals have enabled the Irish Archæological Society to continue its labours to the present day. Of all the publishing bodies of these kingdoms, says a late writer in Blackwood’s *Edinburgh Magazine*, the Irish Archæological Society is ‘the most learned.’ The labour and the merit of producing such ‘wonderfully learned editions’ as those printed by this Irish Society, are, adds the same author, ‘almost beyond practical appreciation.’<sup>1</sup>

“ On the Continent such works have long been executed at Government expense, as they are of a class unremunerative to private publishers. The Continental example has been followed tardily in England by the annual grants made during the last five years for the works entitled ‘Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland,’ and ‘Calendars of State Papers,’ published by the authority of the Lords

<sup>1</sup> *Blackwood’s Magazine*, vol. xc. p. 458 ; xci. pp. 319-325.

Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, under the direction of the Master of the Rolls of England. Under this grant . . . 71 volumes have been published, at a cost of £35,500. . . . Not one of these seventy-one volumes was committed to the editorial care of any scholar in Ireland. . . .

“As we can hardly suppose the existence of a determination to exclude Ireland from her due share of an allocation expressly made for Great Britain *and Ireland*, we may conclude that the administrators of this grant in England have found a difficulty in dealing with Irish Archæological subjects, which differ essentially from those with which English Archivists are conversant.

“The object of the grant might therefore be promoted by placing the portions of it intended for Ireland annually under the control of the Committee of Antiquities of the Royal Irish Academy, in conjunction with the Council of the Irish Archæological and Celtic Society, and the Archivists who may be entrusted with the management of the Record Repository at Dublin. Thus all desirable work in this direction could be executed in a few years in a style creditable to the Empire and beneficial to the public.

“The treatment of the Irish Public Records brought under notice in the following pages is, however, but a section of the system Governmentally pursued of late years towards Ireland, with regard to grants for various branches of science.

“The period when the interest of the scholars of the world centred in the surviving ancient Gaelic monuments of Ireland, was that chosen by Government for the abolition of the Professorships of the Celtic languages in the Irish Queen's Colleges ; and, while for some time past the Parliamentary grants to the British Museum have averaged annually nearly £100,000, those to the Royal Irish Academy, incorporated under Royal Charter for promoting the cultivation of the higher departments of science, literature, and archæology, have been but £500, per annum, or £166 13s. 4d. respectively, for the advancement of each of these three branches of knowledge

throughout Ireland, which is in extent about one-fourth of the United Kingdom, contributing to the Imperial Exchequer a direct annual revenue of above seven millions sterling!

"The present treatise, while directing attention to subjects hitherto comparatively obscure, may, perhaps, be deemed to possess some general interest, as an exposition of transactions in connection with the law of mental property, and the treatment of records, unparalleled in the literary or archivistical annals of these kingdoms."

Gilbert's object in calling public attention to the defective treatment of Irish Records was, not to depreciate the work of individuals employed by the Rolls Office, but to effect a thorough change of method, by means of which the publication of careless and imperfect work would be rendered impossible. In this he was happily successful. On July 16, 1863, a discussion on the subject of the "Record Revelations" was held in the House of Commons, and the first result was seen in the appointment of a committee to inquire into the state of the matter. Some time later a Commission<sup>1</sup> was held in Dublin, Messrs. Thomas Duffus Hardy and J. S. Brewer being the Commissioners, to investigate all matters pertaining to the editing and publication of Irish Records. In the report of the Commissioners the accuracy of Calendars already published was not impugned; but the result of the Commission was the organization of a Public Record Office for Ireland. While in Dublin on this business, Mr. (afterwards Sir Thomas) Hardy, who had thoroughly appreciated the ability and motives of the "Irish Archivist," sought the acquaintance of Gilbert, and thus began a warm friendship, which lasted unbroken until the death of Sir Thomas, in 1878.

<sup>1</sup> July 29, 1864. Dublin.—Messrs. T. Duffus Hardy and J. S. Brewer, by directions of Sir John Romilly, Master of the Rolls, England, commenced at the Rolls Office, Dublin, the examination of the documents in presence of Mr. James Morrin. Later, they presented their report to the Treasury, which report was printed on February 17, 1865.

*From W. H. Hardinge.*

“23, Northumberland Street, Strand, London,

“May 12, 1864.

“I called on Hardy and Brewer, and they were delighted to see me. They know very well that you are the Irish Archivist, and, of course, though I could not confirm their intelligence, I did not deny it. I merely said that the author was unknown, but that I was well acquainted with Mr. Gilbert, and was persuaded he had all the ability, and far more, than the authorship of that publication required. I also said that, officially, I made use of the Calendars, and knew that what the Archivist had stated was more than borne out by the errors and omissions I have discovered. They admitted that there should be an inquiry by reference to the Rolls of Chancery, and said that the matter should be conducted by three persons—one to be selected by the Treasury, one by the Master of the Rolls, and one as a casting vote.

“This looks like business. They said the book would have been more telling if it had less of sarcasm in it. My reply to that was that I knew, if you were the author, that you had but one object—a full, fair, and searching inquiry, that justice might prevail for the benefit of the literary and general public. I was perfectly sure that your motive was free from any animosity whatever.”

*From Rev. James Graves.*

“Rectory, Inisnag, Stoneyford.

“I shall look out for the second series of ‘Record Revelations.’ If it surpasses the first in damaging disclosures, it will be worth reading. I shall not fail to let you know of all treasure trove. Would there be any chance of the Academy’s getting up a fund (special) for the exploration of

crannogues? Du Noyer would do it for his expenses. It is a shame we are doing nothing to examine these rich mines of antiquities, and leaving them to be 'howked' up by the dealers. Many were explorable during the last dry summer."

The following passages, taken from the *Irish Times* and *Dublin Evening News*, show the feeling in Ireland on the Commission and its cause. The *Irish Times* writes on March 13, 1865—

"Some time since an Irish archivist, the author of a publication entitled 'Record Revelations,' startled literary society in Dublin, no less by his extraordinary ability and his profound archæological research, than by his crushing criticism upon the 'Irish Calendars,' edited by Mr. Morrin, under the patronage of the Master of the Rolls. The Irish archivist accused Mr. Morrin of inaccuracy, omission, error, and plagiarism. The ability displayed in the pamphlet, and the deep interest it excited, not only here but in the sister country, induced the Government to appoint two eminent English archæologists, Messrs. Brewer and Hardy, as Commissioners to test the truth of the charges, by comparing the original documents with the work of Mr. Morrin. The Commissioners were gentlemen of high reputation, as archivists, in London; but it is strange that to decide upon the accuracy or inaccuracy of a translation of Irish Records relating to Irish lands, tenures, habits, persons, and antiquities, English antiquarians were selected. We have the Royal Irish Academy, one special and important department of which is devoted to the elucidation of Irish antiquities and Irish records. 'Record Revelations' alone proved that we had amongst ourselves gentlemen familiar with all that relates to archæological studies, and especially with Irish records. It would have been much more satisfactory to the Irish public that one of the Commissioners, at least, should have been an 'Irish archivist.' The Government, however, thought it expedient to employ two Englishmen, and we can

now only prepare them for a criticism from the pen of the author of 'Record Revelations.' They have, as they suppose, detected some 'inaccuracies' in his pamphlet, but we are much mistaken if he does not criticize their report with the vigour, ability, and fearlessness which made his pamphlet one of the most remarkable publications of our day."

The *Dublin Evening Mail* ends a long article on the Report of the Commission of Inquiry, in which it complains of the expenditure of public money on such commissions—

"We ought not to close without stating that Messrs. Brewer and Hardy bear the highest testimony to the learning and literary power of the 'Irish Archivist.' 'In fact,' they say, 'we do not remember to have seen, in England or Ireland, any work of the same nature, in which so much critical knowledge of this kind has been displayed, or which indicates a greater familiarity with archæological studies.'"

*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

"The Library, Armagh, January 23, 1863.

"Should to-morrow be the last day of sub-recommendation, I would urge on you the nomination in the Department of Antiquities of Dr. Ferdinand Keller, of Zurich, who has done so much for Ireland in his development of the Irish Manuscripts in Switzerland, and the interest he has always taken in the archaic literature of the country.

"Among our fellow-subjects there is no man who has more enthusiastically espoused our Antiquarian cause than Professor James Young Simpson, of Edinburgh. The annexation of his name to our list would do honour to our Society, while it would greatly gratify him, and the result of his election would, I am persuaded, very much further the cause of Celtic antiquities. There are also in Scotland, Cosmo Innes, Professor of History in the Edinburgh University; John Stuart, Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, of the Spalding Club; and that matchless man, Joseph Robertson, of the General Register House. Any of

these last might also appear with advantage on the Polite Literature list.

“Now for self. Am I right in attributing a very kindly article in the *Evening Mail*, touching the Ecclesiastical History chair and my candidateship, to John Gilbert? On reading it I said, ‘A friend hath done this,’ and no common friend. I verily believe that the donor of the ‘Opuscula S. Patricii’ has, in his brotherly kindness, magnified the Opuscula of W. R. into dimensions the statement of which is very gratifying, and more an object of aspiration than actual performance. At all events, my dear Gilbert, I don’t put such an act past you.”

*From the Same.*

“February 1, 1863.

“I am entirely of opinion that the Committee should transfer the Hudson fund to the Council of the Celtic and Archæological Society, in trust for the printing of Cormac’s Glossary or other work of Irish Lexicography, with power, however, to the Council to employ it in aid of producing such an Irish Dictionary as O’Reilly augmented from Connellan and O’Donovan. And this done, that the Committee should dissolve itself, and for its passing shadow substitute the substantial permanence of the Archæological and Celtic Society.”

*From Rev. J. Graves.*

“Duncannon, New Ross, February 7, 1863.

“Many thanks for your note about the Council Chamber. Any information as to the constitution of the Irish Council previous to or in the reign of Richard III., other than what is given in Lynch, Mason, and the published Calendar of the Rolls of Chancery, will greatly oblige.

“When are we to expect the next Archæological and Celtic Book? I had an anxious inquiry on the subject this



day from Professor Stephens of Copenhagen. He wants to purchase Reeves' 'St. Columba.' Has no one given White-side what he deserves—a good castigation, for his shameless falsification of Irish History? He is too clever to be ignorant."

*From the Same.*

"Chelsea Lodge, Duncannon, New Ross,  
"February 8, 1863.

"I wonder you don't take up some work under the Master of the Rolls. Look at Riley's volumes from the Corporation Records of London. Surely the Dublin Corporation Records are equally worthy of preservation, and I have no doubt but you could bring enough of pressure on the Master of the Rolls to get the work sanctioned.

"I have been told by Dr. Aquilla Smith that the Dublin Corporation Records are a mine of unwrought riches. Whilst the cash is going we ought to try and get some work done for our Irish 'Materials of History.'"

*From the Same.*

"Chelsea Lodge, Duncannon, New Ross,  
"February 13, 1863.

"Your labours are Herculean. I hope you may have good success in all, and get credit for same: which later result I know from experience is not very sure to follow.

"You ought, though not ready yet, to set to work to secure the appointment of Editor of the Corporation Records<sup>1</sup> whilst the money lasts. Who knows how soon Gladstone may put a stopper on it! Lose no time, if you are wise, and attack Sir John Romilly with all the influence (of rank, as well as literary) you can command. Did the little map in the pocket-book prove of any use or interest? There are faint letterings round the margin, here and there, which I was able to read with a glass."

<sup>1</sup> This work was not undertaken by the Government, but was later begun by the Municipal Council of Dublin, at whose expense it is still carried on.

*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

“The Library, Armagh, February 11, 1863.

“Many thanks, my dear Gilbert, for the great literary treat you have afforded me in the reading of the Munich book. It is a gem in its way, and a most valuable acquisition to our store at the Academy.

“Possibly it is the very copy which Thorpe offered for £2 2s., and which, after passing through divers hands, has come to yours. I cannot discover any notice of SS. Marinus and Amanus in any Calendar or other book accessible to me. Mabillon does not mention them, unless he confounds Marinus with a saint of the same name who was a hermit, and slain by the Vandals in Burgundy about 732, but whose day was the 24th of November, not the 15th, which is our saints’ day.

“The monastery of Rott, *olim* Rota, is situate on the west bank of the Ænus, or Cœnus, now the Inn, near Rosenheim, on the north, to the S.E. of Munich. It was a Benedictine house founded by Conon, Earl of Wasserburg, in 1073. Mabillon visited it in his literary travels. I think I might make a neat paper on the subject for next meeting of the Academy, and, if you have no objection, I will ask leave on Monday to read it. The subject is so new, and the accession to our foreign relations so valuable, that it ought at once to be recorded.

“I am truly delighted with this most delectable book. Long life to the Academy Librarian for securing it. What is the English equivalent for *bairbáin*? It is the diminutive for *bairb*. Opposite the name poor O’Donovan has written in Feilire ‘*Pigotte*.’ Well, S. Banbhan should yield to the voice of the Archæological Council, and without a murmur allow the *Saithar bairbáin* to pass into working hands. I do hope this will be the upshot of Monday’s measures.

“I am full of delight with SS. Marinus and Amanus. I have found another reference to the two saints in Aventinus.”

*From the Same.*

“ The Library, Armagh, February 20, 1863.

“ MY DEAR GILBERT,

“ I have read the proof with the greatest interest, and I congratulate you heartily upon your successful handling of so complicated a subject. The article is one which every lover of Erin must admire ; it is so true, modest, and yet so indicative of varied and best-class information. Personally I don't object to your mode of treating the introduction of Protestantism into Ireland ; but, query, may you not, as the article is for a mixed public, somewhat mitigate what is said ? As regards my own feelings, I am quite satisfied with the manner in which you handled the whole matter, and if you have given a slap at the Aughrim interference in Ireland, you have at least given an equivalent in acknowledging the Papal introduction of the wedge. I may also add that I never read proofs in such a high state of finish, both as regards diction and composition.

“ The Book of Armagh is now nearly ready for the launch. . . . I intend to print in the first volume the whole Patrician matter (48 pages) exactly as it stands in the original, *i.e.* so far as pages, columns, and lines go ; but I must abandon the contractions and other peculiarities of this sort, as there are no types for such, and it would cost a mint of money to cast punches for some 30 new letters. A few of importance and oft-recurrence I must indulge in. But, please God, I will do the work in a style of which my country need not be ashamed.

“ Lord Gosford told me yesterday that he has one volume of the Mazarin Bible, the first book ever printed, for which he gave £45, and that the accession of the other in like condition would make the lot worth £1000. Bishop Daly's copy, which was a poor one, sold for £650.

“ Yours faithfully,

“ WM. REEVES.”

*From the Same.*

“The Library, Armagh, March 2, 1863.

“MY DEAR FRIEND,

“Don't suppose by my not writing to you before this that I am insensible to your kindness in sending me the telegram on Saturday afternoon. I had divers matters on hand. . . . I can only say that I wish the Senior Board (always excepting Drs. Todd, Lloyd, and Luby) had half, yea a twentieth, of your good feeling towards me among them, and I would have come in swimmingly. As it is, I am afloat, and a man living in such an atmosphere as this Library, hallowed and perfumed by the sanctity of the adjacent Rath, cannot but thrive under all untowardnesses.

“I have just now done my day's quantum of copying the Index of the ‘Martyrology’ for the printer. I am trying to get this off my hands before I tackle the ‘Antiphony.’ I never had so many irons in the fire before, and I am trying to keep them all at a white heat.

“Graves, it appears, did not vote on Saturday, and I had expected he would go point-blank against me.

“Dr. Lottner has for next ordinary meeting a paper of a most interesting and *recherché* character, by poor Siegfried, on some important Gaulish Inscription. Lottner had a two-hours' consultation with him on the points therein, and therefore is in a condition to bring forward the posthumous production in full effect. It will be very important, and highly to be prized.

“Yours faithfully,

“WM. REEVES.”

*From the Same.*

“The Library, Armagh, September 11, 1863.

“Can you give me any information concerning, or reference to, the history of the Rev. Robert Scott, D.D., who wrote ‘A Review of the principal characters of the Irish House of Commons, by Falkland, Dublin, 1789’?”

“ I hope you are well and vigorous, and that the cause of Irish letters prospers in your hands.

“ I dined yesterday with old Mrs. Caulfield, and met John Prendergast on the occasion. The old lady is a genuine Irishwoman, and would delight you by her brilliant and sensible conversation. She is a cross between the Molyneux and O'Donnells, and so ought to be a genuine Hibernian. She knew the Cathach well, about the time it came to Sir Neil O'Donnell, and has told me many curious things of its history.”

*From the Same.*

“ October 2, 1863.

“ MY DEAR GILBERT,

“ As you kindly offer to draw up the statement for the Irish scribe, I gladly embrace the opportunity of having it well done, and I enclose you Graves' memorandum, which he wrote as a sketch of the form.

“ How goes on the Record movement? Is there any likelihood of a comprehensive depository? I believe there is a prospect of Dr. Todd's book being released from prison soon. I long to have it in my hands.

“ Should you at any time happen upon your memorandum about Dr. Scott, pray don't forget me. I feel quite in arrear of all literary news, it is so long since I have been in Dublin, and I almost desire the arrival of November to revive the old associations, and the improving intercourse of such men as J. T. G.

“ Bishop Forbes has all but finished his ‘ Arbuthnot Missal,’ so that we may soon expect this valuable addition to our Scoto-Hibernian stock. I suppose we shall soon have Cambrensis' Irish tracts, and the ‘ Wars of the Danes,’ and the 2nd fascic. of the ‘ Liber Hymnorum.’ The harvest is plenteous, but the labourers are few.

“ Yours faithfully,

“ WM. REEVES.”

*From Lord Dunraven.*

“Adare, November 10, 1863.

“Count Montalembert complains that our Archæological volumes are not to be got in Paris. Can you do anything to remedy this, which is entirely a great pity? He says there is but one copy of Colgan’s ‘Triadis Thaumaturgæ,’ in all France. I forget what volume of the Archæological Society St. Columbkille’s poem is published in; can you tell me? It is a great shame that the Bibliothèque de l’Institut does not purchase our volumes. Do try and remedy this.”

*From the Same.*

“Adare, November 16, 1863.

“Many thanks for your letter. Your suggestions are excellent, and I have written at once to Count Montalembert. I am very glad to hear about the O’Donovan’s affairs, which is most satisfactory. Thanks also for the interesting memoir of O’Donovan, which I am very glad to have in a separate form. How one does miss them both! I hope to see you on Friday or Saturday next.”

*From the Same.*

‘Adare, December 8, 1863.

“Thanks for the extract you have sent me about the fairs of Adare, which contains the earliest notice of the town which has as yet come to light; also for the translations. In the *Calendarium Rot. Chart.*, which I have here, I find, page 132, a grant of free warren to John FitzThomas for various places in Limerick. What does ‘free warren’ mean exactly? Then, in page 3, grants to Thomas FitzMaurice, the word *Thenedo* occurs several times. What does it mean? What is the meaning of ‘Limorie et Cantride de Hochville’?”

*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

“The Τῆσὴν ῥεσῆαρετῆα, ἀηδα ἀηαχα,

“December 2, 1863.

“MY DEAR GILBERT,

“Bishop Kelly of Derry has sent me his exquisite manuscript. It is the whole Bible written on vellum as thin as India paper, and compressed into a smaller size than any pocket-bible in fancy morocco, gilt leaves, and gold clasps, which the most fastidious dandy ever inserted into his coat-pocket, or the most delicate frequenter of Trinity Church ever embraced with the kid-glove-encompassed digits of a languid hand.

“It is of English extraction, but long in the keeping of Tir-Conallian priests. Its grand historical feature is the footnote at Genesis i. and St. Matthew i.

“‘Hē libr̄m legavit. M. Petrus Parijs dño Johī Spenser. Quē relinquet post mortē ei<sup>o</sup> Magro aut Bacallario Artiū. aut honesto sacerdoti sc̄ari de P<sup>o</sup>ra Hibernie p<sup>o</sup>dicatori: aut disposito ad p<sup>o</sup>dicandum. Et recipiens eundē distribuet post eius<sup>d</sup> recep̄conē paupibz. iii. š. iiij. đ. atqz orabit ꝑ aīa dicti Petri. Et sub hiis condicōibz tšibit ab uno sc̄ari sacerdote ad alterū.’

“Is not this curious? The writing of this note is 400 years old. Imagine Bachelors and Masters of Arts, preachers or disposed to preach in Ireland in 1460. Why, this tells a better tale than we have been wont to admit.

“Now we must try to find out who Messrs. Petrus Parys and John Spenser were. When you next see Dr. Todd, tell him of this. In 1849 he examined a very beautiful little manuscript Bible, which is in Foyle College Diocesan Library at Derry. But this, though not so minute or closely packed in its writing, is a more exquisite volume.

“Derry for ever, when it possesses two such books!

“Tell Dr. Todd I wrote to the Bishop of Brechin, wishing him many happy returns of the Cross decussate. You and he must help me at the Cῆογ ϣῆῆl.

“Yours faithfully,

“WM. REEVES.”

*From Cardinal Wiseman.*

“London, April 21, 1864.

“Cardinal Wiseman presents his compliments to Mr. Gilbert, with best thanks for his work on the Irish Records, of which he has read with much interest the portions published in the *Dublin Review*.”

*From the Most Rev. Dr. Moriarty.*

“The Palace, Killarney, April 22, 1864.

“I was enjoying myself over a volume of your ‘History of Dublin’ which I had laid hold of, when I got your book on the Records. I turned to it with a relish, and read it through yesterday. The subject-matter is one with which I am entirely unacquainted, but the case you make out as against the Government and their employé seems unanswerable. It might be brought again before Parliament. I recollect an old document being sent, a few years ago, to the Rolls Court to ascertain what it was and what it contained. It was returned with ‘ignoramus for self and fellows.’ They said they could make nothing of it. I found it was a Papal Bull, presenting no special difficulty in the reading, except the peculiar shape of the letters.”

*From Lord Dunraven.*

“London, May 3, 1864.

“I have been away from London, and only two days ago received your book, for which many thanks, and for your letter.

“It is delightful to see the way the Records are all arranged in London.”



*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

“The Library, Armagh.

“I am informed that a Commission is sitting, and has been sitting for a fortnight, on Morrin’s books. They are going systematically through their work, and are to pronounce upon the merits of the performance in a regular report. It is the right sort of a Commission, one which goes not on hearsay or statements of evidence, but which reads and marks for itself. Have you heard the names of the men, and who they are ?

“I hope your *opus*<sup>1</sup> progresses satisfactorily, and that we may soon have all our lieutenants and deputies passing in review before us. I suppose we have done with Lord Carlisle ? Next session may see the office abolished. I wish Government would abolish the mockery and give us a substantial equivalent, say a good Record department !”

*From Lord Dunraven.*

“5, Buckingham Gate, London, May 26, 1864.

“I have only lately heard from Count Montalembert in answer to my letter of November last. Will you send me the Miscellany of the Archæological Society containing St. Colum Cille’s poem, which you said you would present to him in the name of the Council, as I shall have an opportunity very soon of sending it to him. He says that he can do nothing with the present Minister of Public Instruction, but that if our President would write to him applying for a complete set of ‘Documents inédits sur l’histoire de France,’ that we should get them immediately.”

<sup>1</sup> “The History of the Viceroy.”

*From G. A. Grierson.*

“3, Claremont Bank, Shrewsbury,  
“June 27, 1864.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“I am putting together any things I have learned about Constantia Grierson, and I shall be much obliged by any information you will have the goodness to send me.

“May I ask you to let me have particulars respecting any Latin classics printed in Dublin before her editions? Also your opinion, to be used or not used as you may direct, regarding the state of printing in Dublin, or Ireland generally, before our progenitor commenced business as a printer, and what date you can fix for his earliest printed book, extant or reported.

“I fear, my dear sir, I presume not a little on your courtesy, but you have won your spurs with highest honour, and no one more rejoiced in your success than

“Yours very faithfully,

“GEORGE ABM. GRIERSON.”

*From Rev. J. H. Todd, D.D.*

“Athenæum Club, London, July 2, 1864.

“MY DEAR GILBERT,

“Will you send a copy of the ‘Martyrology of Donegal’ to Cardinal Wiseman, if you have not already sent him one? Also a copy, on my account, to my brother, Rev. W. G. Todd, D.D., St. Mary’s Orphanage, Croomshill, Greenwich. Send one also, as from me, to Whitley Stokes. The Government are going to institute an inquiry into the Irish Record publications. The Irish Master of the Rolls<sup>1</sup> violently resists, and urges that no notice ought to be taken of an anonymous pamphlet. The thing, however, I believe, will be done. The only part of it that looks suspicious is

<sup>1</sup> John Edward Walsh.

that they have asked the English Master of the Rolls to name two (or three) persons to report on the subject.

“Ever yours,

“J. H. TODD.”

*From Rev. J. Graves.*

“Rectory, Inisnag, Stoneyford,

“August 27, 1864.

“What of the Commission on Morrin and Co.? I am going through his third volume. He has benefited by the castigation of Archivist, and gives, for instance, the offences of those who received pardons, which he never condescended to do in the former volumes. By the last Returns about the Brehon Laws it would seem we are about to get some result at last from the Commission. There is ‘some secret history’ there, too, I dare say.”

*From the Same.*

“Rectory, Inisnag, Stoneyford,

“August 29, 1864.

“I was asked to make a few notes to illustrate the engraving of the seal. As the inscription or legend would begin with ‘Sigillum,’ could one read ‘Guardianus’? I would suggest ‘Conventus.’ I don’t think St. Thomas’s had a Guardian. The third volume of Morrin is more carefully done than the others, but bad is the best! The index is useless, or nearly so. I am making a *Kilkenny* index for my own use.

“Prendergast met Hardy at Haliday’s, but, of course, there was not any talk of the Rolls Calendar. I am sure Hardy and Brewer’s report will be a fair one. Do you know any one capable of making (for payment) a transcript of the Roll of goods and sacred utensils found in the suppressed monasteries, preserved at the Custom House? I have permission from the Secretary of State to have it copied, but cannot go to Dublin.”

*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

“The Library, Armagh, August 10, 1864.

“I got a paper from Jos. Robertson of the Gen. Reg. House, Edinburgh, last week, which he sent me on account of an article on the Scottish Records. I cut the article out, and sent it to the *Dublin Evening Mail*, who inserted it on Saturday last, *pro bono Hibernico*. I enclose you the slip, which you will oblige me by returning. Our great drawback here is the want of a first-rate general record scholar in high position, or even a second or third-rate man, who would be capable of directing a record movement. I wish they would send over such a man as T. D. Hardy as Chief Commissioner, and a couple of steady Irish Archivists associated with him. Any word of the Irish Master of the Rolls Record Commission? Who are to compose it, and where is it to sit? Any literary news?”

*From the Same.*

“The Library, Armagh, October 8, 1864.

“I agree with you entirely as to the advisability of employing poor Crowe.<sup>1</sup> Mental reserve or impracticability is the only thing to be apprehended in his case, for he is, no doubt, clever and a good scholar. It is melancholy to see him in such poverty, and I would be very glad to give a helping hand in raising him from his prostrate condition. Had he had the wisdom, when independent, to put himself in connection with the Archæological Society, and make friends for himself, he might have taken a better stand at the Academy. But the evil is, I hope, not incurable, and it would do my heart good to see him on his legs again. If he would only share in the generous friendly spirit of O'Donovan, who never withheld a helping hand from a literary labourer, he might secure friends to himself, and become an Irish referee.

<sup>1</sup> J. O'Beirne Crowe, Professor of Irish, Queen's College, Galway.

“I may not be able to make my appearance in Dublin till the Academy session opens, but when the time arrives it will be a comfort to have him as an assistant and auxiliary, and, with his aid, a good thing may be made of the Adamnanic tracts.”

*From the Same.*

“The Library, Armagh, November, 22, 1864.

“The Library reference of the Antiphonarium Benchorensis, as Mr. Albert Way gave it to me, is ‘Codex Bibl. Ambros. C. No. 5. Inferiore,’ and I believe it is entitled ‘Hymni sacri cum aliquot Psalmis seu Canticis.’

“It will be a great treat to get it back in Ireland after a thousand years’ absence. And it will be as easy as not to have it included in the loan, should the authorities consent to grant our request.

“The Italian authorities may not be in very good humour with Great Britain just now, after the cold shoulder which was given to their Prince in London. I am working at the ‘Life of Adamnan,’ and hope to be prepared, after a consultation next week with Crowe, to commit it to the printer.

“The Trin. Coll. Manuscript of the 2nd Vision is a very intractable document, but still it may afford some light, and it is also well to be able to state that, such as it is, it has been collated. The Academy paper copy is, I believe, a transcript of it. It’s a great pity we can’t get the Cain. Had we known of Hennessy’s visit to Oxford, we might have got the text, and possibly have come at the translation, by hook or by crook. It’s a very curious tract. I have the translation by O’Curry, but under a kind of embargo. I remember the time when I could have copied the whole in open day.

“Surely the Brehonians ought to be obliged to the Archæological Society if it would help them in the delivery of their conceptions, especially as the birth of the expected first-born is so very tardy.”

*From Rev. J. Graves.*

“Rectory, Inisnag, Stoneyford,

“December 29, 1864.

“Do you mean to say that the Academy would undertake the printing of a History of the Diocese of Ossory, with Memoirs of its Bishops etc., or do you confine your idea to the Taxations of the Diocese? I did not think the Academy ever undertook a work like what Prim and I propose to bring out, but if it did, I would be glad to entertain the idea.

“Your intelligence about the Morrin affair is just what I expected. Although *chassé* as editor, yet he will not be exposed, and any qualifying phrases in the report are sure to be dressed up, and served to such fools as are willing to swallow them.

“I hope you are well, and that the Lord Lieutenants prosper in your hands. General feeling seems to say that the office is drawing near a close, and then we shall have a big Larcom.

“I was sorry not to see Duffus Hardy when I was with you, for he is a good and clever man, only, I fear, somewhat prejudiced against Erin. However, he has had a good opportunity of examining into Erin's Record resources, and I hope he has profited by his experience.”

In 1865 Gilbert became a life member of the Royal Dublin Society, and in the following year was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

In 1865 he published his ‘History of the Viceroy's of Ireland,’ which was received with eager appreciation as a new page of Irish history. The following passage is taken from a scholarly review of the work in the *Athenæum* :—

“This work leads us to hope that history of Ireland is about to be written anew—not re-written from old books bristling with old prejudices, but from new sources, and by comparison of old and new statements, and after due weighing of adverse testimony. Some idea of the improved

Irish history about to be furnished to the public by Mr. Gilbert (the present is but the first volume of a contemplated series) may be formed by comparing his list of Viceroys with that given by Haydn. In the 'Dictionary of Dates,' from Hugh de Lacy in 1173 to Piers Gaveston in 1308 Haydn gives but five names. In Mr. Gilbert's volume there are the names and the histories connected with them of thirty-two Viceroys. Haydn consulted books that yielded little information, or that were incorrectly searched; and these so bewildered him that, between Geoffroi de Marreis (1215) and Gaveston (1308), he registers nothing but a blank; whereas in that space of time, extending nearly to a century, there were not less than twenty-two Viceroys, and many of them were men of great ability and influence. If we include some who seem to have been Justiciaries rather than Viceroys, Mr. Gilbert's list would be still greater in comparison with Haydn's. If we compare the Viceroys enumerated in Mr. Haydn's list with those whose histories are given by Mr. Gilbert in his first volume—that is from Lacy in 1173 to Henry (afterwards the eighth of that name) in 1494 (according to Gilbert, 1501 in Haydn) we find that in the 'Dictionary of Dates' they amount to thirty-nine; in the 'Lives of the Viceroys' to ninety-six; and in this number we do not include Governors or Deputies, or others who occasionally exercised vice-regal privileges." The review ends, "It is one of the ablest and most useful books on Irish history that has hitherto come under our notice."

The *London Review*, January 20, 1866, in one of a series of articles on the Irish Church Commission, treating of the history of the See of Dublin, says, quoting largely from this work—

"Mr. Gilbert, the learned author of the 'History of Dublin,' in his recently published volume on 'The Irish Viceroys,' founded on a minute and careful examination of muniments and State papers, unpublished documents, and chronicles in the public offices, has thrown much new light on the history of Ireland from the Conquest of Henry II.

down to the Reformation. He is eminently qualified for his task, and, being a Roman Catholic gentleman, by no means wanting in patriotism, we may rely on his statements respecting the Catholic Church of the Pale in those ante-Reformation times. From the authentic sources of which he has availed himself, we gather some curious facts about the Archbishops of Dublin."

*From Adolphe Pictet.*

“Genève, 4 Mai, 1865.

“J’ai l’honneur de vous adresser ci-joints quelques exemplaires d’un petit travail sur les noms d’hommes gaulois empruntés au cheval, inséré dans la Revue Archéologique. Je vous prie d’en accepter un pour vous, et de remettre les autres de ma part au Dr. Graves, au prof<sup>r</sup> O’Sullivan et au prof<sup>r</sup> Lottner. Je serais fort reconnaissant de toutes observations critiques que ces messieurs voudraient bien me transmettre, et dont je ferais mon profit pour la continuation de ce travail.

“Où en est la publication de M. le Dr. Graves sur les inscriptions en *ogham*, annoncée depuis si longtemps, et que j’attends avec une vive impatience? J’apprends aussi qu’il est question de publier le précieux glossaire irlandais laissé par M. O’Curry. Ce serait là un important secours pour les recherches gauloises, et je vous prie de me dire si je puis espérer de le voir paraître sans trop de retard. Déjà celui d’O’Donovan, ajouté à la nouvelle édition d’O’Reilly, m’est fort précieux, mais il est à regretter que l’on ait réimprimé telle qu’elle cette indigeste compilation d’O’Reilly, à laquelle on ne peut jamais se fier. Je crains que cela ne retarde encore l’exécution d’un dictionnaire qui serait plus conforme aux exigences de la science actuelle.

“J’ai bien reçu en son temps le ‘Martyrology de Donegal’ que vous avez eu la bonté de m’envoyer. J’y ai trouvé une riche moisson d’anciens noms propres qui ont notablement augmenté ma collection, et je vous en remercie vivement.”



*From Rev. J. Graves.*

“Rectory, Inisnag, Stoneyford, June 14, 1865.

“I am glad to find that your ‘Viceroy’s’ is likely to contain so much specially to interest me. I hope to get great profit from its contents as to the things and personages you mention.

“The ‘Archivist’ has arrived, and I have read it. He completely demolishes the famous Report. The publication from the Old Com<sup>rs</sup> Calendar, 34th page, and that of the omitted Patent to O’Shaughnessy, is unanswerable. Hardy is made to answer himself effectively—no words could be stronger in antagonism to the doctrines put forward in the Report than his, from the Report on the Carew papers, and the Introduction to his Close Rolls, etc. As in the former Pamphlets, keen wit and biting sarcasm flash like the blue glint of the polished rapier in the hand of a practised fencer.

“What use ought to be made of this Pamphlet? Will Colonel Dunne bring it before Parliament?

“What a pity the old Record Commission could not act honestly!”

*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

“The Library, Armagh, October 21, 1865.

“The fasciculus arrived safely yesterday, and to-day I have received your additional note with Crowe’s communication enclosed.

“He seems to have taken great pains with his subject, and his Introduction shows an amount of style and reading that does him great credit. From the specimen of his abilities thus afforded, I would say that he is a most valuable accession to the project, and that his help will give an air and a certainty to the publication which otherwise it would not possess.

“I dare say he is able to detect errors in the Culdee

paper; but as to the text being faulty, I am inclined to think that in so saying he is either exercising a microscopic exactness, or indulging the Hibernian propensity of objecting to everything outside No. 1. His exception to the interpretation of  $\tau\omicron \text{ } \dot{\text{I}}\text{A}\mu\eta$  is utterly groundless and frivolous.

"As to the text, I copied it first with great care, then Stokes went over it with an emending hand, and lastly, when it was in type, Hennessy made a careful collation of it with the original. But some day or other I will compare it, for satisfaction's sake, and then throw down the gauntlet to all cavillers. As to the translation, I must be content to feel that it contains some errors, but that scholars have it in their power, now that the original is fairly before them, to make a better as their knowledge permits. I hope your 'Lord Lieutenants' get on with reasonable speed. We have a new item now to our Catalogue, and one who, though but a Baron, represents an exceedingly old Norfolk family.

"Have you ordered a copy of 'Theiner's Records'? I yesterday wrote to Dr. Russell engaging one for this Library. It promises to be a very valuable work.

"Lord Dunraven informed me lately that the President<sup>1</sup> of the Irish College at Rome (if I remember right) has written a book on 'The Ecclesiastical History of Ireland,' which sets some of our good friend's (Dr. Todd's) statements in a new light. I wonder what the book is. Does he mean Dr. Moran? I have also been told that a Brehon Law volume has been published. If so, I expect a treat when I go up to Dublin, which I hope to do on Monday next, and there to have the pleasure of seeing you once more.

"Mr. Power writes to me that he is busy compiling his 'Bibliotheca Hibernica,' and that his materials have grown to great dimensions.

"I have prepared an Index to my Culdee paper, and am printing a Title, Table of Contents, and Preface, the materials for which are in Gill's hands. These will be *propriis impensis*, and if the Table of Contents and the Index would

<sup>1</sup> Now Cardinal Moran.

be acceptable to the Academy, I will present them with a supply for their issue, which can be furnished as an afterthought to the members. I am grieved to hear so bad an account of our great and good *primum mobile*. With such a man, to damnify his eyes was the sorest calamity which could happen. Let us hope that the hand which smote will be pleased to soothe."

*From Rev. J. Graves.*

"Rectory, Inisnag, Stoneyford, August 27, 1865.

"I shall be very glad, indeed, to meet you with Hardinge, and shall take the first opportunity of arranging with Lady Ormonde for an inspection of the evidence chamber at Kilkenny Castle."

*From S. Nilsson.*

'Stockholm, le 28 Fev., 1866.

"Il y a quelques jours que j'ai reçu votre lettre du 16 Fevrier, et hier m'arriva la gazette que vous m'avez remis. De l'une et de l'autre je vous prie d'agréer mes sincères remerciements.

"De l'honorable commission dont vous m'avez chargé, je me suis essayé de m'acquitter déjà hier. J'ai visité 4 ou 5 de mes amis, qui ont un nom dans le monde savant, mais aucun n'a voulu souscrire la supplique au Ministre Anglais. L'un, étant Botaniste, me disait qu'il ne connaît pas les écrits de Mr. Petrie; l'autre, étant Zoologue, disait le même. Un troisième me repondait nettement que ce serait un affront envers le ministre de le soupçonner d'avoir plus de confiance au temoignage des étrangers qu'aux compatriotes du defunt, qui le devaient connaître le mieux. Et je ne puis pas désavouer qu'il y a quelque raison dans sa manière de voir l'affaire. Néanmoins je souscris mon nom, parce que vous l'avez voulu, et sous la reserve que plusieurs étrangers

souscrivent. J'espère qu'en tout cas les pauvres filles tiendront ce que vous avez demandé pour elles.

“Mais, mon Dieu, a vraiment Mr. Petrie pu vivre avec famille à Dublin d'un salaire de £200! Le double, au moins, serait nécessaire pour vivre avec famille à Stockholm.

“Avec le plus grand intérêt j'ai lu le panegyrique du feu Petrie fait par Dean Graves, qui s'est présenté en grand Orateur, et de beaucoup de talent. Mais, quoique ce fût le devoir du panegyriste d'élever le sujet le plus possible, je me demande si Mr. Petrie a vraiment été un si grand Archæologue, et qu'il a fait tant de progrès à l'archæologie de l'Irlande, que dit le Dean Graves? J'en doute.

“Quant à moi, je connais un seul vrai et impartial Archæologue en Irlande, et vous le connaissez aussi, son nom est Sir William Wilde. Dans son livre sous le titre de ‘*Beauties of the Boyne*’ j'ai recueilli beaucoup de renseignements précieux; car son auteur a vu d'autres parties du monde qu'Irlande, et il sait faire des comparaisons ingénieuses de ce qu'il a vu. Il ne veut balayer les traditions populaires, mais il les examine avec sagacité, et il en prend des résultats profitables pour la science.

“Quant à Mr. Petrie je ne connais ses écrits que par le referat de son panegyriste; mais j'aurais bien de l'envie, de connaître son traité sur les tours rondes, qui me semble très problématiques.

“J'avais presque oublié de vous remercier du grand honneur que vous m'avez fait, en me présentant comme membre hon. de la royale Académie d'Irlande. C'est la 26<sup>me</sup> des Académies des savantes sociétés, dont je suis membres (dont 3 en Angleterre) et je vous assure que j'apprécie l'honneur d'être membre d'une si célèbre Académie, et dans un pays que je considère comme étant pour l'Archæologie le plus intéressant de l'Europe.

“C'est pourquoi aussi je souhaite de voir mon ouvrage sur l'Age du Bronze publié en Irlande, où il se trouve plus de bronze que dans aucun autre pays de l'Europe, excepté les parties meridionales de la Scandinavie, où il y en a aussi beaucoup.

“Vous dites dans votre lettre :—‘ Mr. Murray, as I told you in a former communication, said he would publish your work if he got a good translation.’ Cette lettre de vous je n’ai jamais reçue. Comme je vous ai dit auparavant, j’ai une bonne traduction anglaise faite par Mr. Baker, fils d’un Amiral Anglais, et la Comtesse Suedoise de Ruth. Et je serais bien content si Mr. Murray voulait publier cette traduction. Mais dans l’ouvrage il y a beaucoup de xylographies et autres figures gravées en pierre. Quant aux premières l’éditeur en pourrait avoir des clichées par l’éditeur du texte suédois, mais les lithographies devaient nécessairement être refaites.

“Vous dites que vous n’avez vu qu’une part de mon ouvrage. J’en suis étonné, car le 12 Juillet 1865 je vous ai remis une copie complète, cartonnée par la poste. Peut-être qu’elle est encore dans la poste de Dublin.”

*From Rev. Dr. Todd.*

“London, April 24, 1866.

“I was very glad to hear that Dr. Moran is henceforth to be settled in Dublin. We must get him made a member of the R.I.A., and you may assure him that he shall have full access to everything he wishes to see in Trinity College. I shall be too happy to endeavour to repay, if I can, some of the kindness he showed me when I was in Rome. If you will take the enclosed paper to Dr. Carson, he will, I am sure, get everything else done, so as to have him admitted to the Library without delay.

“Can you give me any information, or refer me to any authorities, respecting antient Irish *glibs*? Was it simply long hair hanging down the back, or was it plaited or matted on the head? Was there not an Act of Parliament, temp. Eliz., prohibiting the wearing of *glibs*?

“The matter of the Irish Records will assuredly be jobbed if we do not keep a sharp look-out.”

*From Dr. Wilde.*

“ I, Merrion Square, Dublin, May 19, 1866.

“ I received back the Report, and have adopted all your suggestions. The identification and numbering of Hardinge and Reeves' 1000 articles will, I fear, take up a great deal of time. Since you read the Report I have added a paragraph to it respecting the Indian musical instruments, as I am fully convinced that we never should have such things in our collection.

“ Trinity College has long fought shy of depositing its Irish antiquities with us, chiefly because our officials were on the Board of T.C.D., or expected to be there. Now, however, I think it is high time to make a stir in the matter, and, at all events, give them the option of refusal.

“ Some may think that this Report is too voluminous, but it is entirely consequent upon the unfortunate interference with the resolution of Council in 1859.

“ I am off by the mail train, and heartily wish you could be with me, as I expect to take a survey of the plain of Moytura Conga, from the Firbolg Monument on the top of Knockma, at 12 o'clock to-morrow.

“ I hope Hardinge is not displeased with the Report, as he is the last person in the world I would wish to annoy, for I am sure, whatever the result may be, his actions are pure and honourable.”

*From the Same.*

“ Moytura, October 11, 1866.

“ Many thanks for your letter. I am better, and able to oversee workmen and take short antiquarian journeys, but nothing more. Either the sword-hilt is a lie, or a loss? Which is it? How I wish you could come down to us for even a day. Did you hear that part of New Grange has fallen in?”

## CHAPTER VIII

1867-1870

Secretary to the Public Record Office, Ireland—Dinner Club, R.I.A.—  
Home and social life—Death of his mother—Letters.

THE Public Records Act, Ireland, received the royal assent on August 12, 1867. In June of that year, Mr. Thomas Duffus Hardy, Deputy Keeper, London, wrote to Gilbert—

*From T. D. Hardy, Deputy Keeper.*

“Rolls House, London, June 12, 1867.

“I have not heard anything lately relative to the Irish Record Office, but a rumour reached me one day last week that the ‘Irish Office’ wishes to appoint an Irish barrister to the office of Deputy Keeper. I have forgotten the name of the gentleman. I think you would be wise to turn your thoughts to the secretaryship; but I would not, of course, refuse the deputy keepership if it should be offered to you.”

The post of Deputy Keeper was not, however, given to Gilbert, to whom it was due by all the laws of fitness and of peculiar service done to the public.

On September 23, 1867, Dr. Samuel Ferguson, barrister-at-law, was appointed Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in Ireland. The establishment for the Department was arranged in December, and on January 1, 1868, the senior official staff of the Department was constituted by the appointments of John James Digges la Touche, A.M., M.R.I.A.

(late of office of Deputy Keeper of the Rolls), to be Assistant Deputy Keeper ; and John T. Gilbert, F.S.A., M.R.I.A. (Hon. Librarian of the Royal Irish Academy and Professor of History and Archæology, Royal Hibernian Academy), to be Secretary.

Gilbert was advised by his friends that the secretaryship was the more practically important post, as giving more power where work was concerned, and cheerfully accepted it. In October, 1867, Mr. Hardy wrote to him—

*From T. D. Hardy.*

“The only screw that has been loose respecting the office of Secretary, is whether or no there should be such an officer, as the Irish Record Act did not create one. This difficulty has now, I understand, been removed, principally through the recommendation of the Master of the Rolls in Ireland. I sincerely hope you will be the man. I wrote strongly in your favour to the Master of the Rolls. If you are not the favoured man, I shall be much disappointed. I have done all in my power for you.”

*From Rev. J. Graves.*

“Kilkenny.

“I am glad to get your note confirming the statement of the papers that you have been appointed Secretary, and that there is a prospect of ‘business’ being begun at once. Mr. Hardinge tells me that you can help me to a transcript of valuables of the suppressed monasteries.”

*From J. T. Gilbert to Rev. J. Graves.*

“I have received your note, on which I cannot act for some few days to come, as we have not yet got even a table or chair in the office! However, you may rely on hearing from me at the earliest moment.

“Pray excuse me to Prim when you next see him, and



say I should have written had I not been overwhelmed with business—and relied on you to tell him of my having become Secretary.”

Two months later Gilbert received notice of his formal appointment—

*From Sir T. A. Larcom.*

“Dublin Castle, December 23, 1867.

“SIR,

“I am directed by the Lord Lieutenant to acquaint you that His Excellency has been pleased to appoint you to be Secretary to the Public Record Office, your appointment to take effect on and from the 1st of January next inclusive.”

All who were alive to the importance of the thorough treatment, as well as the careful preservation, of the Irish Records in Ireland rejoiced at Gilbert's appointment, and congratulations from those most competent to judge of such matters poured in upon him.

*From Lord Romilly, Master of the Rolls in  
England.*

“Rolls House, London, November 28, 1867.

“I beg to return you my very cordial thanks for the very beautiful copy of your valuable ‘History of the Viceroy of Ireland,’ which you have done me the honour of presenting to me. The value is increased in my estimation by coming from you.

“Allow me to take this opportunity of congratulating you on your appointment to the office of Secretary to the Record establishment in Ireland, which I trust will prove as agreeable to yourself as I am sure that it will be advantageous to the public.

"If, as Mr. Hardy informs me, you are likely to come to this country shortly, I trust you will allow me to have the pleasure of making your acquaintance personally."

*From T. D. Hardy.*

"Rolls House, London.

"Although I am very much pressed by official business, yet I must write a few words of hearty congratulation. I believe you are the fittest man in Ireland for the office, and I wish you every success in it."

*From J. S. Brewer.*

"Public Record Office, London,

"November 29, 1867.

"I have to thank you for a magnificent copy of the 'Viceroys of Ireland.' The book will be particularly valuable to those who wish to study the history of that country in a more attractive form than is by most writers presented to them, especially when it arrives at that period on which I am engaged.

"Allow me to congratulate you on your new appointment. It will, I trust, furnish you with more leisure and opportunities for pursuing your favourite subjects, and doing that service to the history of Ireland which no one is more capable of doing than yourself."

Taking up his position as Secretary to the Public Record Office, Dublin, Gilbert had a great purpose in mind. He desired to open up the entire treasury of documentary material for Irish history, to print all that was necessary or desirable for the enlightenment and for the use of present and future historical writers, and thus, by incontrovertible evidence, to free history of many pages stained by misrepresentation. He aspired to see the new Record Office an institution based on the lines of the French School of Archivists, where the

work is done with systematic and inevitable accuracy, which appoints minor schools in every province, and whose archivists, being thus thoroughly educated and technically trained, are competent to fill important posts as heads of the several departments.

His entrance on the Secretaryship was therefore a very happy moment of his life, when a wide field for future developments of his projects of national work opened before him, and he at once became absorbed in these congenial labours.

When he had been established in the Record Office about a year, the Deputy-Keeper, London, wrote to him—

*From T. D. Hardy.*

“1869.

“I was very much pleased to receive a letter from you, but still more so to hear that everything is going on so satisfactorily in your department. I always felt convinced that you were the right man in the right place, and that if any person could get over a difficulty, you were the one to do it. I shall be very glad to have your report, and see how you have managed to work your staff. Have you yet obtained the permission of the Treasury for your ‘National Manuscripts’ to be sent to Southampton?”

At this period, as in earlier years, his sunny temperament and ever ready wit made Gilbert a favourite in society, and gained him the lasting affection of many acquaintances and the love of his intimate friends.

Mr. John Ribton Garstin<sup>1</sup> writes of the Dinner Club of the Royal Irish Academy—

“We dined in an upper back room of Macken’s Hotel, which was the house in Dawson Street, at the corner of the passage to South Frederick Street. Two ravens used to live at the opposite corner (a public-house), and hopped about the

<sup>1</sup> Vice-President of the Royal Irish Academy, and President of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland.

street all day, occasionally affording us amusement. Macken's was an old-fashioned place, with a reputation for good cookery and an atmosphere of old port, which, however, was not much in demand at the Academy dinners. The select band of diners exercised a powerful influence in the Academy, and usually pulled well together. Sir William Wilde often presided, and sometimes brought genial guests, but the number dining hovered about thirteen. The dinner was simple and unpretentious, but the flow of wit was such as probably could not be matched nowadays. Undress was usual, but not invariable. Gilbert was the life and soul of these parties, always ready with repartee. His jokes were always enunciated with a dry humour and a twinkle of the eyes, and were invariably sensible and to the point. I wish I could remember some of his wonderful *bon-mots*, for they were so perfectly spontaneous, so clever and keen, and yet so free from offence, that they deserve recording. But time rapidly effaces such trifles, and Sir John will be remembered for his solid work rather than for his witty sayings. A warm friendship existed between him and myself, chiefly in connection with the Royal Irish Academy, to which he was so devoted. One thing we always strove for together, namely, to maintain for the Academy Council its reputation as a public body where no considerations of religion or politics should be allowed to interfere with the management or the men. Though differing in both religion and politics, we were cordially agreed in this, and many a time we helped each other to secure what we thought best in the interest of the Academy, regardless of individual claims save those of merit."

The following note is from Mr. John MacCarthy (son of the poet):—

"In the sixties I remember his coming out to Dalkey, where we were then living, at Summerfield ('Some-where-field' was the Gilbertian variant), when he and my father would take long walks together. We would sometimes meet him in the train on our way back from Dublin, and how

amused and delighted we young folks used to be by his endless jokes. Sometimes he would pun on the names of the stations: when the porter called out 'Sea-point,' he would whisper to some one who had been slow in appreciating the last, 'That was specially addressed to you.' When we neared Blackrock he would bid us farewell with the remark, 'This is the rock on which we split.' At a later time he would describe the little estuary there, destined to be filled to make the Public Park, as 'the Promised Land.' When it was proposed to establish a halfpenny paper in Dublin to be called the *Irish Echo*, he said it might well be named so, because it would 'never answer.' A clergyman had directed a box of books to be sent to Villa Nova to be called for. It remained a long time unclaimed, and when questioned, 'J. T.' would describe the box as 'a reserved case.' Of a book about to be published which he thought of little interest he observed that the title 'Miscellany,' or 'miss-sell-any,' was a capital hit.

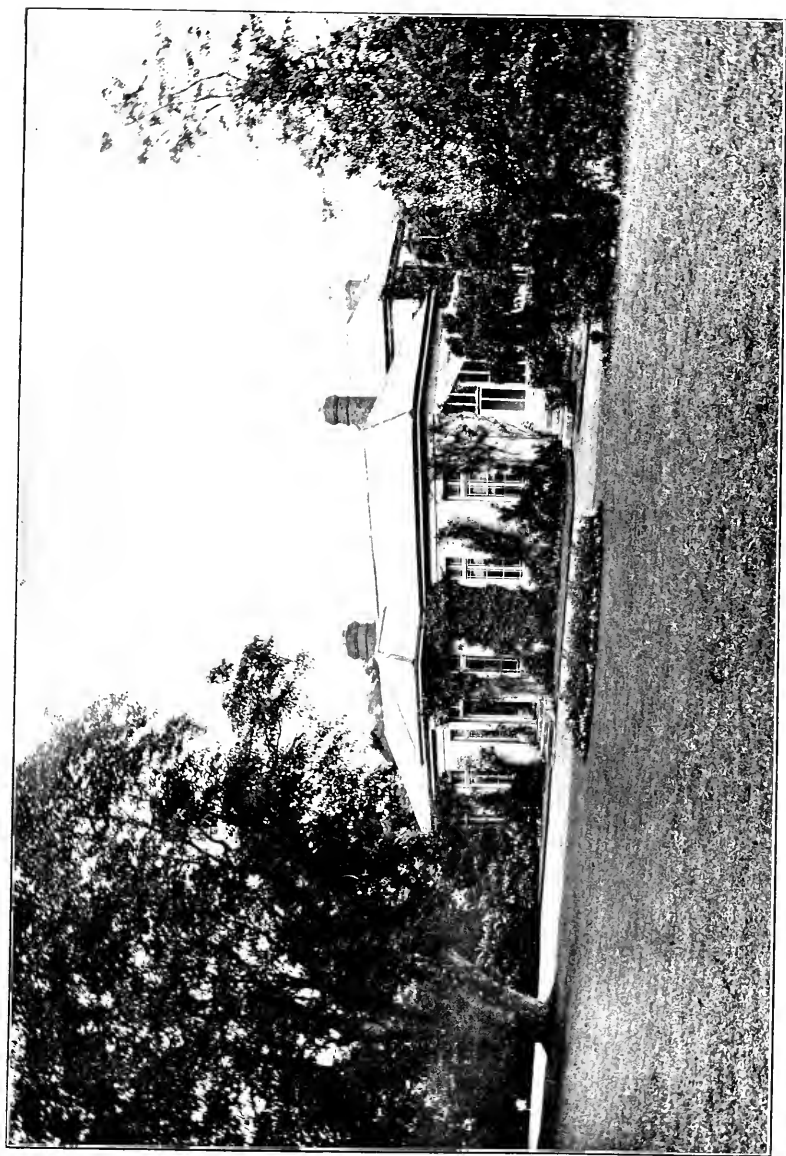
"Mr. J. C. O'Callaghan's Carlyleian flow of eloquence found an appreciative audience at Villa Nova. 'When I go to Gilbert's *I dine*,' he would say. Yet his host could not always restrain himself from interrupting. On one occasion O'Callaghan mentioned Plato's definition of man, 'an animal with two legs and without feathers,' and proceeded to narrate how next day Aristippus brought a plucked fowl into the lecture hall, saying, 'Here is Plato's man.'

"'This,' continued O'Callaghan, 'was the reply of Aristippus——'

"'Perhaps you mean Arrah-strip-us!' laughed J. T. The bow could not always be bent, and it was after long and toilsome hours spent in his library poring over crabbed and abbreviated Latin and French Manuscripts that he would relieve his mind by a succession of such jokes. Sometimes he would amuse his friends by the supposed adventures of distinguished acquaintances, mimicking in the drollest way their manner and somewhat pompous phraseology, but all in the purest fun, never with a trace of bitterness or ill-will. He seemed purposely to avoid speaking of his work or of serious subjects

generally, yet on rare occasions it was a treat to hear him discuss archæology and science with the accomplished Dr. W. K. Sullivan, literature and philosophy with Judge O'Hagan, Irish history with Father Meehan. If a classical discussion were originated by Father Meehan's quotations from Horace and Ovid, he would show his familiarity not only with these, but with less read writers, such as Petronius and Martianus Capella. His knowledge, too, of French and Italian literature extended far beyond the limits of his special studies. I do not forget his particular friendship for the old cat 'Jack,' who reached the patriarchal age of nineteen years. Jack used to repose on a particular stool described by J. T. as his 'catafalque.' The Archivist made a great pet of him, and would stop work to play with him, suddenly taking up pen or ruler, whereupon the two friends would engage in a solemn sparring match."

His domestic life was a very happy one. "J. T.," as he was affectionately called by his friends, was worshipped by the mother and sisters whose bright social qualities contributed much to the attractions of Villa Nova, a home looked on by all who frequented it as an ideal of comfort and harmony. There was a sweet old-world atmosphere in the house, an odour of fresh flowers and old books. The walls were lined with rare engravings, chiefly portraits of men and women more or less connected with Ireland in the past; much of the furniture was a couple of hundred years old, cherished remnants from a great-grandfather's home in Devonshire, or from Jervis Street, Dublin, or rescued from the burning of the old house at Brannickstown. On some of the old silver and glass on the table appeared mysterious masonic emblems, reminding the Irish Catholic Gilberts of their English Protestant forefathers. As for books, they were everywhere. A large library was lined with them from ceiling to floor; the dining-room had admitted two noble bookcases where some precious tomes in rare ancient bindings of great beauty were preserved under glass; even the drawing-room had contrived to work in several well-filled bookstands among its ornaments,



VILLA NOVA.





adding charm to an apartment distinguished for a general air of culture, and remarkable for a tender green light reflected from the tall lime trees bounding the thither side of the lawn.

In the late sixties the strong, meek mother was living the last years of her life. Her portrait shows a broad, calm brow, mouth with sweet and pathetic lines, serious and sympathetic eyes, white hair, still flecked with the gold of the past, parted in smooth bands under the widow's cap which she wore for thirty-seven years. Gilbert's devotion to his mother, on whose personal traits and many of whose mental characteristics his own were modelled, was noted by his friends, who tell how he would sit by her side in the evenings, and lead her to the piano on his arm with an air of tender courtliness that was pleasant to see. Her singing and playing of Irish music, especially of some of the melodies of Moore, delighted him. From her he drew the gentle sensitiveness and modest reserve so remarkable in his strong nature, as well as his tall figure, fair complexion, and other salient physical characteristics.

In 1869 he was induced to prolong a necessary visit to London by a run to Paris, his friends rejoicing that the overworked brain was getting a holiday. Especially pleased was his favourite sister Mary, his close friend and home companion from childhood, who delighted to give him all the help and sympathy, at work and at play, that was in her power. Her letters pursued him in his travel, and nothing of the daily life at home was too trivial to be recorded as sure to interest the absent one, who seemed to be "at such an immense distance away from us." "The meadow grass is to be cut next week," she writes; "the new cow is not pretty, all white with a red nose, but David says she is 'a great sort, and very young.'" A spray of forget-me-not that blossomed thirty years ago lies dry and yellow between the pages of this letter. She was careful for his distinguished appearance. "I hope you got a fashionable coat in London; and how do you get on with no one to put your studs in your shirts for you?" He has been charged with visits to friends and acquaintances in London and Paris, and she is solicitous lest

archivistic or palæographical attractions should betray him into forgetting any of these. "Do go to see Renée at Vaugirard. Can you manage Clarisse? I fear you will not have time for Pauline. I hope you will visit the Irish College; Father Fagan<sup>1</sup> says his friends there will make so much of you." Many excuses were made to prevail on J. T. to lengthen his sojourn in Paris. "It is such a pity not to stay more than a week when you are there, for when will you ever go again?" She gives him messages from friends. Dr. W. K. Sullivan is delighted he is enjoying his holiday, and wishes he would go further on the Continent; Mr. Hardinge sends word that Florence ought to be visited; another votes for Venice, in particular. "We had a long visit from Mr. O'Callaghan; he sends you instructions not to read a word or look at a book until you return, but to 'kick up your heels and frisk about!' He is glad you are seeing Paris in her ball-dress, not as he saw her in 1841. How I wish I were with you in the Louvre! Do stay and enjoy the different sights, and don't hurry. Philippa says you *must* see everything, so that she need not have the trouble of sending you to any more panoramas!"

One Murphy, a notorious person, was making a noise in the newspapers of the day, and Mary playfully alludes to "a young man of the name of Gilbert" arrested for attacking Murphy. "You certainly lost no time in having a fling at him! I shall send on the joke to D. F. MacCarthy."

In London he hears that "we are anxious to know how you got on at the Record Office, and if you have met Lord Romilly." Then a sad note is struck, announcing the death of Dr. Todd. "Short as is the time since you went away, so many friends are gone!" Meanwhile she was doing some little service at home for the holiday-maker. "I have done some of the Index for you; not much, only the letter A. I do a little of it every evening, to keep me from feeling lonesome without you."

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Thomas J. Fagan, for many years curate, and afterwards parish priest, of Blackrock, county Dublin, a devoted friend of the Gilberts.

That was in the last year of the loved and honoured mother's life. Mary's letters bear her messages. "The mother is well and sends her dear son her most affectionate love. She is kept busy watching the post for your letters." Again, "The mother is going on beautifully, only that she is constantly in terror of letters missing the post, and expects the postman every time she awakes." Mrs. Gilbert was then gradually fading away, Eleanor was a confirmed invalid, Philippa very frail, and even Mary was delicate, for she says, "I am, thank God, getting very strong, and able to walk anywhere." These four dear ones were a sacred charge to Gilbert. During his absence he was, as ever, mindful of them. "You are the dearest old boy in the world to write to us so regularly. Mother is delighted to get your letters and the newspapers."

In the spring of this year Mary Gilbert sent a spray of shamrock, picked out of the lawn at Villa Nova, to D. F. MacCarthy, who was then with his wife and children at Boulogne, and the response enclosed the original manuscript of a poem with which most Irish people are familiar—"A Shamrock from the Irish Shore." "J. T." was so charmed with the poem that he had it printed separately in a tiny booklet with shamrock-green cover, for private circulation among a few appreciative friends. One or two of these tiny booklets remain as precious relics in the hands of the present writer, memorials of J. T.'s affection for his friend of years.

Of this little booklet Gilbert, when sending it to a friend so late as 1891, wrote—

"The enclosed 'Shamrock from the Irish Shore' was intended to have reached you on St. Patrick's Day. I have had a very few copies printed in this form as a memorial of my dear sister, who sent the shamrocks to Boulogne, and of D. F. MacCarthy, who sent the poem by return of post. I have seen some Irish people very much affected at some parts of this poem."

Mary Gilbert wrote, on receiving the poem<sup>1</sup>—

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.

“I do not know how to thank you, or in what words to express our delight in the beautiful lines you sent yesterday. The exquisite taste and fancy, the poetic imagery and tenderness of the verses are only what might have been expected from yourself. I believe the English are right, after all, in crushing and bruising us; they are an eminently practical people, and find that the best good is wrung from us after we have been driven out of the dear old land we all love so well. It strikes me that you might have been looking at the shamrocks of Summerfield long enough before those twelve sweet stanzas would have come forth. We have just been reading the poem to an English Protestant clergyman, one of the last in the world you would suppose likely to appreciate them, and he has become so enthusiastic about them that I have had to give him your autograph to carry away to England. We are charmed at the idea of having you all back. A nice place at the top of this avenue (Fort William) is to be let, and we have been picturing you settled there. J. T. says you may be alarmed at the name of the house, and thinks it would require a person no less warlike than our friend the Brigadier (O’Callaghan) to take the Fort!”

That year was about the last of the happiest days of the Gilberts as a united family group. In 1870 the cherished mother died. J. T.’s private diary of that year shows a leaf turned down, and under the date (July 7) appears a line in his clear delicate handwriting—

“Circa horam septimam post meridiem decessit Mater.”

## CHAPTER IX

1867-1873

Inspector for Ireland under the Historical Manuscripts Commission—  
Facsimiles of the National Manuscripts of Ireland—Trip with D. F.  
MacCarthy—Letters.

THE Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts was appointed by Her Majesty Queen Victoria on the second day of April, 1869. The following is the list of the members and inspectors of the Commission :—

### HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS COMMISSION.

#### *Commissioners.*

Lord Romilly ( <i>chairman</i> ).	Lord Talbot de Malahide.
Marquess of Salisbury.	Sir William Stirling Maxwell, Baronet.
Earl of Airlie, K.T.	Very Rev. C. W. Russell, D.D.
Earl of Stanhope.	George W. Dasent, D.C.L.
Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, M.P.	Sir Thomas Duffus Hardy, D.C.L.
Right Rev. Charles Graves, D.D., Bishop of Limerick.	

#### *Secretary.*

W. G. Brett, Esq., Rolls House, Chancery Lane, London, E.C.

#### INSPECTORS OF MANUSCRIPTS UNDER THE COMMISSION.

*For England.*—H. T. Riley, Esq.; A. J. Horwood, Esq.; Joseph Stevenson, Esq.

*For Scotland.*—John Stuart, LL.D., General Register House, Edinburgh; W. Fraser, Esq.

*For Ireland.*—J. T. Gilbert, Esq., F.S.A., Public Record Office, Four Courts, Dublin.

On February 26, 1870, John T. Gilbert received the letter of the Commissioners appointing him Inspector of Manuscripts in Ireland under the Commission.

In the first report (1870) issued by the Commission, Gilbert reported on Manuscripts belonging to Lord Talbot de Malahide, Mr. J. W. Bayly of Finglas, the Earl of Rosse, the Earl of Charlemont, including letters, and a Latin poem by an ancient author, Mr. Hewitt of Cork, Dr. Caulfield; also on the municipal muniments of the corporations of Dublin, Limerick, Waterford, and Kilkenny.

In 1871 the second report of the Commission contained reports by Gilbert on the MSS. of the Marquis of Ormonde, the Earl of Granard, the Earl of Rosse, the O'Connor Don MSS., including the papers of Charles O'Connor of Belanagare, a collection which formed part of the great collection of Irish MSS. purchased from the representatives of Charles O'Connor by the Duke of Buckingham of Stowe; Major-General Dunne, a collection containing an account of the war and rebellion in Ireland since the year 1641; Dr. R. D. Lyons, MSS. including correspondence and papers of William King, Archbishop of Dublin.

The third report of the Commission (1872) includes, by Gilbert, reports on the MSS. of the Marquis of Ormonde; the Earl of Granard; the historical memoirs of the Geraldine Earls of Desmond, in possession of A. Fitzgibbon, Esq., of Stanmore, Middlesex; and the Parliamentary History of Ireland, by Hugh Howard, LL.D. (son of Robert Howard, Bishop of Killala and Elphin, 1729), in the possession of the Rev. M. Moloney.

To the fourth report (1874) he contributed reports on the MSS. of the Marquis of Ormonde; Viscount Gormanston, including Register beginning in the reign of Henry II.; Sir Richard O'Donnell, Bart., including the Psalter of the CATHACH, ascribed to St. Columba; the MSS. of Trinity College, Dublin, including "An Aphorismical Discovery of Treasonable Faction," an original personal narrative of affairs in Ireland from 1641 to 1652, written in English, but with

many peculiarities of orthography, unusual and semi-foreign words, and replete with extracts from and references to authors in Latin, Spanish, and Irish. The writer gives us to understand that he was a man of the sword, "an eye-witness of all the storie," and that he was equally allied by blood with both ancient Irish and Anglo-Irish, and that his ardent desire was to perpetuate the memory of General Owen O'Neill. Gilbert endeavoured to obtain the publication by Government of this remarkable manuscript, to be included in the Master of the Rolls' series, "Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland," and, having failed in this, he edited and published it himself, independently, some years later. In this report the famous "Depositions" are fairly treated, and passages are quoted from learned sources proving them unworthy of credence. It may be noted here that Trinity College, when publishing a catalogue of its Manuscripts in 1900, made no allusion to the previous examination and cataloguing by Gilbert, who had made complete but compendious lists of the Manuscripts in presses A. to G.

In the fourth report (1874) Gilbert also reported on the MSS. of the former College of Irish Franciscans at Louvain, which were transferred in 1872 from the Franciscan College of St. Isidore, Rome, to the Franciscan Convent, Dublin.

In the sixth and seventh reports of the Royal Historical MSS. Commission (1877 and 1879) Gilbert devoted his attention to the MSS. of the Marquis of Ormonde.

In the eighth report (1881) there appeared reports by Gilbert on the MSS. of Ormonde; Lord Emly's collection; the correspondence and papers of E. S. Pery, Speaker of the House of Commons, Ireland, from 1771 to 1785; and further reports on the correspondence and MSS. of Charles O'Connor, of Belanagare, co. Roscommon, and on the MSS. of Trinity College, Dublin; also reports on the MSS. of Lord Talbot de Malahide, and of the Diocesan Library, Derry.

The ninth report (1883-4) published reports by Gilbert on the MSS. of the Duke of Leinster, containing the Red Book of Kildare; the MSS. of the Marquis of Drogheda,

which include letters of the Loftus family ; correspondence of Lord Macartney, Governor of Madras, 1781 to 1785 ; the Rinuccini MSS., styled the Nuncio's Memoirs, in the collection of the Earl of Leicester, Holkham, Norfolk ; and a further report on the MSS. of the Marquis of Ormonde.

In the tenth report (1885) he reported on the MSS. of the Earl of Fingall, including the MS. entitled "Light to the Blind;" of the Corporations of Galway and Waterford ; of the Sees of Dublin and Ossory ; and of the Jesuits in Ireland.

In the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth reports (1888, 1891, 1893) Gilbert devoted his attention to the MSS. of the Marchioness of Waterford and Earl of Charlemont.

In the fourteenth report (1895) he continued his reports on the MSS. of the Marquis of Ormonde and of Lord Emly.

In the fifteenth report (1897) he reported on the MSS. of Charles Haliday, Esq.

In 1899, the year after his death, appeared the second volume of Gilbert's report on the MSS. of the Marquis of Ormonde.

In 1870, having already made considerable progress in the selection of specimens of ancient Irish writings, he was formally appointed by the Right Honourable Edward Sullivan, Master of the Rolls in Ireland, to select and edit the documents which were published under the title of "Facsimiles of the National Manuscripts of Ireland."

The following is an extract from the report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in Ireland :—

"It being deemed proper that a series of specimens of national manuscripts relating to Ireland should be executed, under the authority of Her Majesty's Government, by the photozincographic process at the Ordnance Survey Office, Southampton, as had been done in respect of the national manuscripts of England and Scotland, the editing of the intended work has been confided to J. T. Gilbert, Esq., F.S.A., secretary of this office. Mr. Gilbert having selected, amongst other materials for his work, specimens from some records in this office, the Master of the Rolls has been pleased to direct



that the requisite facilities should be afforded for having photozincographic facsimiles of them taken for the intended publication."<sup>1</sup>

As Inspector of Manuscripts in Ireland he was authorized to request admission to every muniment room in the kingdom, and to make choice there of such manuscripts as would best serve the purpose of his historical undertakings, and therefore he had peculiar facilities for the work of the national manuscripts entrusted to him. His search was made not only in the great libraries and other public repositories of such jealously guarded treasure; he effected an entrance into the houses of those noblemen throughout the three kingdoms who were possessors of ancient and historic documents. In some cases it was not quite easy to persuade the heads of such houses to deliver over their manuscripts for an inspection which might result in their publication, but after a little trouble these difficulties were gradually overcome. One noble lord, whose taste was for sport rather than for books, stated that he had in his house some bundles of (apparently) old rags, which were said to contain writings, but they were so black with time that he defied any one to decipher whatever hieroglyphics might possibly be inscribed upon them. However, he was persuaded of the desirability of testing their value, and with a highly satisfactory result to himself, as well as for posterity.

In many noble houses Gilbert was made welcome, and the Duke of Leinster, the Marquis of Ormonde, Lord Arundel of Wardour, the Earl of Leicester, the Marquis of Drogheda, Lord de Vesci, Lord Talbot de Malahide, Lord Granard, Lord Gormanston, the Earl of Meath, the Earl of Fingall, and others, generously opened their muniment rooms to his research.

The work on the National Manuscripts of Ireland included not only the most perfect reproduction of Irish illuminated and other historic writings, but also an "account" of the

<sup>1</sup> From the Fourth Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in Ireland, 1872, page 21.

same, forming a valuable volume of history in itself, the whole requiring an intimate knowledge of every page of our country's annals, and of every piece of ancient, or mediæval, or even later important writing connected with the history of Ireland from the date of its earliest records.

In 1871 he began to superintend, at Southampton, the process of the photozincographing of his selections for the first part of the "Facsimiles of the National Manuscripts."

*From Sir Henry James.*

"Ordnance Survey Office, Southampton,

March 16, 1867.

"I am glad you have undertaken to make out a list of the National Manuscripts in Ireland which we can copy, so that we shall be able to have a series for Ireland like those we are publishing for England and Scotland. If you commence with the 'Book of Kells,' the 'Book of Armagh,' and 'Libre Uidre,' selecting about six or eight pages of each, and bringing down the series in chronological order, as perfect as you can, I think you could make the Irish series as perfect and as interesting as those we are publishing. We can assist you from the Record Office and British Museum by documents intimately connected with the history of Ireland, and I will ask Mr. Sanders, the officer from the Record Office who is here in charge of the manuscripts, to give a helping hand in this."

*From the Same.*

"Southampton, March 23, 1867.

"I am glad to hear that you are making some progress in the selection of the specimens. I quite agree with you in thinking it is desirable to divide the Irish series in the way you mention, but this is a matter which is entirely in your own hands. I only wish that the original intention should be kept in view as far as possible, viz. to illustrate the change in the languages and writing by as perfect a set of documents as possible. We shall only require the leaves of the

manuscripts which it is proposed should be copied to be sent over, and I hope you will bring them yourself and transfer them to Mr. Sanders, who will give a receipt for them, and be answerable for their safe custody. I enclose a photograph taken at Oxford of a page of a copy of the New Testament which belonged to Bede, and if you select any specimen from a copy of the New Testament which you have, perhaps it would be as well to select the parts containing the same passage, or, what would be better, the whole address. As soon as you can bring together a series of manuscripts which the R.I. Academy would like to see published in facsimile, Lord Talbot de Malahide, with Lord Dunraven and Mr. Monsell, would find, I think, no difficulty in getting the Treasury to sanction it."

*From Right Rev. Dr. Graves.*

"Westfield, Limerick, April 26, 1867.

"MY DEAR MR. GILBERT,

"It is very satisfactory to me to hear that there is a chance of our having our Record Department well organized.

"Your suggestion with respect to the work of the Brehon Laws Commission appears to me to deserve the most favourable consideration. It would be the natural thing to do if the Record Department be well officered, as I have every reason to hope it will be. It will give me much pleasure to confer with you on this subject when I next go to Dublin.

"Ever yours faithfully,

"CHARLES LIMERICK."

*From W. Richardson.*

"Oudenburg, Ostende, July 22, 1871.

"MY DEAR JOHN,

"Do you remember Micawber?—if you forget Wm. Richardson! But I won't at the moment enter into our many reminiscences. How is your genial and excellent mother, and how are the young ladies?"

“Strangely enough, your name has this moment recurred to me in connection with your doing some justice to a much-wronged man. I will at once mention the name of your late old friend Charles Haliday, as it is with reference to his only brother, Doctor Henry Haliday, who is resident here, that I write you. You will be as much surprised to hear of Charles Haliday’s only brother being the resident British physician at Ostende, as I was myself when I first discovered the fact. I send you his card. Write to him if you like, but I think you might justly defer doing so until you announce to him that he has been made, as a slight honour to the memory of his brother, M.R.I.A.

“Dr. Haliday, before coming here, filled the position (as doctor at Howth) of physician to the Earl, but no matter what position he filled, I ask you to do him a piece of tardy justice which he deserves at the hands of his countrymen. He became a *Catholic* from *Conviction*—the orange Wm. Richardson tells you so—and curse the dog that should seek to punish a man for his right of judgment!

“I will say no more, only to recommend this act of justice to you. You know that William Haliday, of the Court of Exchequer, was brother of these men—I mean William Haliday, the great Irish scholar—whilst Daniel Haliday (send me back his enclosed arms) was a member of your Society.

“*Quis dat cito dat,*

“*Semper idem,*

“WILLIAM RICHARDSON.”

*From J. T. Gilbert to his Sisters.*

“United Hotel, Charles Street, St. James’s, London,

“December 9, 1871.

“MY DEAR SISTERS,

“I received your notes and the papers. Sir Henry James had invited me to dine to-day at Southampton, but it was not possible for me to be there, as it was only this afternoon that I brought my work at the Record Office here

towards a close. A Government officer has received orders to proceed to Southampton with the documents which I have selected here, and I expect to go down with him. On my return I shall have to be here at least two days, at the British Museum and the Archbishop of Canterbury's library at Lambeth. I may also have to go to Oxford. I am invited to Lady Hardy's this evening, and hope to go. I have not seen any one you know, and after my work is done it is too late to go about. The Prince of Wales's illness is the great subject of the day here.

“Yours affectionately,  
“J. T. GILBERT.”

*From the Same to the Same.*

“United Hotel, Charles Street, St. James's, London,  
“December 13, 1871.

“MY DEAR SISTERS,

“I started early yesterday morning for Southampton. Sir Henry James was most attentive to me, brought me round the whole place himself, showed me everything of interest, and gave me a capital lunch. He is the director of the entire Ordnance Survey for the United Kingdom. You may judge of the extent of the place at Southampton when I tell you he has five hundred Royal Engineers at work in different departments of it. The contents of the manuscripts room cost three millions sterling! It is completely fireproof, and guarded day and night. The day was so foggy that we could not see any distance, so I managed to despatch my business and get back to London. I have sent D. F. a card to say I would go down this evening to see him, if possible. I had to put in another day at the Record Office to-day to arrange further in connection with matters for Southampton.

“Your affectionate brother,  
“J. T. G.”

His archæological labours were meanwhile continued, and in 1869 Gilbert proposed to the Royal Irish Academy, as a work to be undertaken by them, the translation and editing of the ancient Irish books of great importance, treasured in their library, but inaccessible to all save scholars learned in the Irish language. This work he himself inaugurated by editing and publishing "Leabhar na h'Uidhri" and "Leabhar Breac;" and, entering on the same undertaking with regard to the "Book of Leinster," he was cheered by the sympathy of all Celtic students and scholars throughout Europe.

At this time, along with his responsibilities as Secretary to the Public Record Office, as Hon. Secretary to the Irish Archæological and Celtic Society, and of his duties at the Royal Irish Academy as Member of the Council and Hon. Librarian, entailing the supervision of the library, he had other and weighty works of his own in preparation, and drove all these varied undertakings well together, holding the reins with ease and power.

*From Lord Talbot de Malahide.*

"Athenæum, London, May 20, 1867.

"MY DEAR GILBERT,

"I fear there is no chance of an increased grant to the R. I. Academy this year; indeed I have not been able to speak to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the subject. However, he has *promised to take up the matter next year*. I enclose you the correspondence between him and Gregory.

"However, there is every prospect of our being able to get some assistance through the Board of Works. I am to supply Gregory with the particulars, which he will submit to the Secretary of the Treasury, and I trust that it will be arranged soon after the Derby.

"Gregory has heard from Todd that the Petrie Collection is now in the market, but he thinks that it is too late. They certainly have made a mess of it.

"Believe me, yours truly,

"TALBOT DE MALAHIDE."

*From George du Noyer.*

“Carrickfergus, July 24, 1867.

“MY DEAR GILBERT,

“Thank you very much for your kind letter of this morning, and I quite agree with you in thinking it advisable to have a catalogue of the drawings of antiquities, which I presented to the Library of the R.I. Academy on a late occasion, and printed in the *Proceedings* of the Academy. I heard of some glorious gold torques, etc., having been lately sent to the Academy by my friend Dr. Moore, of Belfast, who showed me photographs of the twisted torque. With this exception, I have not heard of any antiquities having been lately discovered in this neighbourhood, but if such should be my good fortune, I shall at once secure them, if I can, for the Academy. Apart from geological matters, the only really interesting *find* on my part is that of numerous worked flints in the undisturbed sand and gravel which overlies the ‘drift’ marl clay all over this tract, and along the opposite shore of Belfast Lough. For a long time I was under the impression that these chipped flints were fragments of the naturally crushed flint which occur in the upper portion of the chalk, and also in ‘drift’ over it, *dressed* by human hands to fit them for the purposes intended. A late discovery, however, of a spot where these chipped flints occur in thousands, a small *mound* in the shore of Larne Lough, shows me that they are ALL artificial. I have collected many hundreds of these curious implements with a view to writing a paper on the subject.

“Yours very truly,

“GEORGE DU NOYER.”

*From Dr. Wilde.*

“1, Merrion Square, W., Dublin, September 1.

‘DEAR GILBERT,

“If I possibly can, I will attend the committee for the purchase of gold articles on Friday. Can you tell

me anything about them, or refer me to some one for information respecting them, as Clibborn is not in the R.I.A.? If you could call some day, I would show you a grand additional collection of Beranger's drawings and writings, since we last spoke on the subject.

"Yours,

"W. R. WILDE."

*From Lord Talbot de Malahide.*

"Malahide Castle, August 24, 1867.

"MY DEAR GILBERT,

"I enclose you a letter I have received from Sir T. Larcom on the subject of treasure trove. Perhaps you would be kind enough to supply me with the necessary information relative to the gold ornaments. The present officials of the Treasury seem to be in a delightful state of ignorance on the subject of what has been done in this matter.

"Believe me, yours very truly,

"TALBOT DE MALAHIDE."

*From Adolphe Pictet.*

"Genève, 21 Novembre, 1868.

"Décidément vous me comblez, vous me gêtez, et je ne sais en vérité comment vous remercier de votre obligeance. Grâce à votre bienveillante intercession je me trouverai en possession d'un ensemble de matériaux qui me seront infiniment précieux pour mes travaux, et que j'aurais eu quelque difficulté à me procurer à l'aide de mes propres ressources. J'en suis extrêmement reconnaissant, et je vous prie aussi de vouloir bien transmettre mes remerciements à la Commission des Brehon Laws pour ce précieux cadeau. Il aura pour moi un double intérêt, comme monument historique et au point de vue de la langue. Sous ce dernier rapport, il me fera attendre avec plus de patience la publication des glossaires de O'Curry, que je regrette bien de voir retarder si longtemps.



“En retour des services que vous me rendez je voudrais pouvoir au moins vous envoyer une étymologie sûre pour le nom de lieu dont vous me parlez. Vous savez, toutefois, à quel point les étymologies de ce genre sont incertaines quand on ne possède plus les noms sous leurs formes primitives, et cela paraît être le cas pour celui que vous mentionnez. Je crois, cependant, comme vous, que son origine première est scandinave, et voici ce que je conjecture.

“En ancien norse, *hagí* *hag-lendi* signifiait pascuum, ager pascuus, de *haga*, concinnare, ordinaire, d'où secondairement, *hegna*, circum sepire, aggere munire. Cf. le suédois *hage hägn*, sepes, septum, et domus; l'anglo-saxon, *haga*, *haeg*, agellus, mansus, villa, *hege*, *hegge*, sepes, septum (d'où l'anglais, *hedge*, etc.) l'ancien allemand *hagian*, *hagan*, tueri, custodire, *ga-hag*, septum *hag*, *hac*, urbs, *hegga*, sepes, vallum; d'où plusieurs noms de lieux, comme *Heggeloh*, *Heggelohol*, etc. (v. Graff Sprechschatz. v. cite).

“À côté de la racine *hag* se place *hug* avec le sens plus abstrait de curare, cogitare, etc., mais les dérivés de l'une et de l'autre racine passent souvent du matériel au spirituel, et vice versa. Ainsi, l'on trouve, en gothique, *hugs*, gen. *hugsis*, praedium, et en danois, *haug*, hortus, pascuum.

“C'est, je crois, à ce groupe qu'il faut rattacher votre *Hogges*. Ce nom, toutefois ne peut être du scandinave pur, si, comme tout semble l'indiquer, c'est un pluriel en *es*, car la terminaison norse est *ar*. D'un autre côté l'article *le* dans la forme *Le Hogges* (pour *Les*?) ne peut s'expliquer que par le normand francisé, ou par l'anglo-normand, et l'identité du normand *Les Hogges*, que vous citez (maintenant encore *Les Hogues*, dans le département de l'Eure), rend la chose plus certaine encore. Dans celui de Seine et Oise il y a aussi un hameau qui s'appelle *La Hogue* (la grande et la petite). Peut-on historiquement admettre cette influence franco ou anglo-normande?

“C'est ce que vous déciderez, sans doute, en pleine connaissance de causes.

“Je crois, en résumé, que *Hogges*, ou *Les Hogges* a dû

signifier primitivement *pascua*, *praedia*, ou *septa*. Au même groupe germanique se lient les nombreux *Haag*, *Hag*, *Haye*, *Haie*, *La Haie*, etc., qui se trouvent en Belgique et en Hollande.”

*From the Same.*

“Genève, 25 Septembre, 1868.

“Je vous remercie infiniment de l'accueil favorable que vous voulez bien faire à ma demande d'informations au sujet des cours d'eau de l'Irlande, et je m'empresse de vous adresser les détails plus précis que vous me demandez sur la nature de ces informations ainsi que sur la forme à leur donner.

“Ce que je désire en thèse générale c'est un catalogue aussi complet que possible des noms irlandais, surtout des plus anciens des cours d'eau de votre île. Si les matériaux rassemblés en vue d'une topographie de l'Irlande sont, comme je l'espère, pourvus *d'indices*, il ne serait pas difficile d'en extraire les noms en question, dans le cas contraire le travail serait, sans doute, plus considérable. Quant à la forme à donner aux articles de ce catalogue elle pourrait être très concise, et à peu près comme suite.

“1°. Le nom irlandais, le plus anciennement connu du cours d'eau, fleuve, rivière, torrent, ou ruisseau, avec son nom actuel, son lieu géographique, et son caractère comme affluent.

“2°. Le sens probable de ce nom en irlandais.

“3°. Le caractère distinctif du cours d'eau que son nom peut exprimer, couleur, rapidité, etc. Ainsi, par ex :

“*Maigh*, the *Maigue*, comté de Limerick, affluent du Shannon.—Cf. p. 1. *maighis*, eruption of water, breach (O'Reilly Dict.), etc.

“*Succa*, the Suck, affluent du Shannon ; small mountain, stream, sinuous and floody. (Hy Mani. p. 82.)

“Sens probable ?

“Je crains bien un peu d'être indiscret en demandant tant

de choses, et je me résigne d'avance à accepter avec reconnaissance ce que vous pourrez me fournir dans la mesure du possible. Des données même restreintes pourront m'être très précieuses pour mon travail comparatif. Il est de fait que plusieurs noms gaulois de rivières se retrouvent comme tels en Irlande. Par ex : *Samara* et *Samair*, ancien nom de l'*Erne*, *Glana*, plusieurs cours d'eau, et *Glan* (tioprat, a well, Martyrol. p. 238), *i.e.* pure ; *Dubis* et *Dubh*, the black (Sligo. Magh Leana. p. 61), etc., etc.—Je ne doute pas qu'il ne s'en présente encore beaucoup d'autres. Vous concevez à quel point le glossaire de O'Curry me serait précieux pour les questions étymologiques, et pourquoi je déplore de plus en plus les retards qui s'opposent à sa publication."

*From Dr. Whitley Stokes.*

"Simla, India, May 26, 1869.

"I am delighted to hear of your project to lithograph 'Leabhar na h'Uidri,' and am early looking forward to receiving the proofs which you promised to send me. I have a careful transcript of the first few leaves of the manuscript which I made at the beginning of 1861. It breaks off at the *Inram curraig Alailduin*. So I shall probably be able to check the accuracy of the proofs.

"There is a well-written copy of 'Leabhar Breac' by Eugene O'Curry in the Library of Trinity College. Could not this be photozincographed as Domesday Book has been done at the Ordnance Office, Southampton? With copies of two such splendid manuscripts as 'L. na h'Uidhri' and 'L. Breac' foreigners like Ebel and Ascoli, and exiles like me, would be able to work as well abroad as if we were in Ireland.

"As to the tract on prosody in the 'Book of Ballimote,' I shall be very glad indeed to get the copy which you so kindly offer. O'Donovan, as doubtless you know, speaks of the tract in his 'Grammar,' p. 427. But I doubt if he ever studied it. Of course, I cannot, until I have perused it, make

any promise as to publishing. Pray let the copy be as nearly as possible a facsimile, *i.e.* preserving the contractions and divisions of lines.

“In the Report of the General Meeting of the Archæological Society held on April 1, 1854, it is stated that the Irish text of Dr. Graves’ ‘Book of Oghams’ is printed off. I should like greatly to have a copy of this text. What *is* the cause of the delay in printing poor O’Curry’s collections of words?”

*From Prof. Henri Gaidoz.*

“Librairie Franck, 67, Rue Richelieu, Paris,

“Le 2 Mai, 1870.

“J’apprends avec plaisir qu’elle va (the R.I.A.) publier une série Irlandaise et surtout le *Leabhar na H-Uidhri*. C’est sans doute une publication qui entraîne de grands frais. . . . J’admire votre confiance dans le succès de la *souscription Todd*. Si elle réussit, j’espère que vous n’oublierez pas d’offrir le ‘Professorship’ à M. Ebel. Si, du reste, vous n’avez pas (comme je le présume) assez de souscriptions pour fonder une chaire, il faudrait employer cet argent à des publications, et non à une statue ou un buste inutile. . . . Je vous sais un gré infini de vos offres de service pour la *Revue Celtique*. Quand le 1<sup>r</sup> numero aura paru (enfin!!!) vous verrez que je donne, ou plutôt tâche de donner d’après mes renseignements, une chronique des faits intéressants le public des études celtiques. Si alors paraissent dans les journaux de Dublin des articles que vous croyez devoir m’intéresser, moi et les lecteurs de la *Revue* (découvertes d’antiquités, de MSS., articles de littérature celtiques, etc.) je vous serais reconnaissant de me les envoyer pour ma chronique. Je ferai peut-être aussi plus tard appel à vous pour une idée que je mûris que je réaliserai peut-être dans les n<sup>os</sup> suivants, de publier dans la *Revue* les comptes-rendus des séances des sociétés savantes des pays celtiques, et de celles qui hors de pays celtiques s’occupent quelque fois

de choses celtiques. (Académie d'Irlande; Soc. de Kilkenny; Soc. des Antiq. d'Ecosse; Soc. Anthropologique de Londres; Soc. Ethnologique de Londres; Société des Antiquaires de Londres; Société des Antiquaires de France; Société d'Archéologie de Paris; Société Anthropologique de Paris; Société des Antiquaires du Rhin)."

J. G. Prim, antiquarian of Kilkenny, writes in 1870—

"The surname of the Bishop James, concerning whom you inquire, was Phelan. He succeeded David Roth in the see, but there was an interval between the death of the latter and the consecration of the former. Bishop Phelan received King James II. on his arrival in Kilkenny."

Father Moore, Johnstown, Kilkenny, writes in the same year—

"I would feel greatly obliged to you, as one of the best living authorities, to tell me all you know about Chief Baron Hely, who went circuit in 1691. There is a tradition of his dying in Ennis, having sentenced a man to execution, the sentence not to be carried out till he should leave the place. He felt he was near his end, and ordered his body to be buried in Ennis, so that the man was reprieved."

The Earl of Kildare asks—

"Where are the originals of two letters from the Earl of Kildare to the Earl of Ormonde, of which there are extracts in the 'History of the Viceroy,' also of the Act of Attainder, p. 454, the English Repealing Act, p. 460, and the Irish do., p. 464?"

Members and officials of the Dublin Corporation continued to look to Gilbert for enlightenment on their points of difficulty. Mr. Francis Morgan writes from the city law agent's office—

"I have in preparation for the Municipal Corporation of Dublin a most important case for opinion of counsel involving very ancient title to a part of their property. I am most desirous to procure a copy of the first number of the 'Historical and Municipal Documents of Ireland,' series, Lord

Romilly, edited by yourself, and would ask the favour of the proper authority to let me have one immediately.”

*From Sir T. Duffus Hardy.*

“Rolls House, London, June 12, 1867.

“There can be no possible objection to your communicating to the Lord Mayor and Corporation of Dublin the decision of the Treasury relative to the publication of a volume of their muniments. I would have written to the Town Clerk myself, but I concluded that the Treasury would communicate with the authorities of Dublin Castle, who would have informed the Corporation of the result of their application.”

In May, 1870, Michael Angelo Hayes<sup>1</sup> wrote on a point of interest connected with the Municipal Records—

“I know you are familiar with all the charters of the Corporation, and if you could give me any information as to the original constitution of the office of Marshal, I would feel much indebted to you. I have heard that this charter of James II. was registered in the Rolls Court in September of the same year in which it was granted. The point I am interested in discovering is, whether the office is by charter, or held during good behaviour, or during pleasure.”

Dr. W. K. Sullivan writes, in 1873, from Queen’s College, Cork—

“I cannot tell you how delighted I was to hear that the first batch of leaves of the ‘Book of Leinster’ had been received. That was a real triumph. I always dreaded some hitch at the last moment. Now we shall have a copy of the three most valuable manuscripts, which were in danger of becoming illegible. Of course I shall get a copy of the ‘Book of Leinster’ for the College Library.

“I have got the material for one sheet of the ‘Táin Bó

<sup>1</sup> A Dublin artist of note, at that time holding an official post in the Dublin Corporation.

Cuailgne' just ready, and am only awaiting some further information from O'Looney about what the printers have been doing *in re* the type, to send it in to them. I have impressed on O'Looney the necessity of our having a considerable portion in type by the end of February. We ought to have the volume out, if possible, during the sitting of Parliament.

"I hope it is true that Les *Éveqûes* have made O'Looney Professor, and that they have given him a decent salary. I got a copy of the *Evening Post* from him, so I suppose it must be true. This takes a great load off my mind. As I told you when in Dublin, almost the only hesitation I had about leaving the Catholic University was on account of the helpless state that he would be in when I was gone. This appointment will keep him about the Academy and give him more liberty of action. I have written to him not on any account to undertake immediately the delivery of public lectures, as was promised for him in the *Evening Post*. He would do anything for you, and there is no one on whose judgment he relies more than on yours, or from whom he would take advice more readily. I wish, therefore, that you would impress upon him the danger of rushing before the public at once. A man may have a very profound knowledge of a subject, may be a good teacher of the subject, and may be able to produce real enthusiasm among students (how many I have known who could do all this,) and yet be wholly unable, shall I say absolutely incompetent, to deliver a public lecture."

In 1873 Gilbert was requested by Dr. Woodlock, rector of the Catholic University, to deliver a course of lectures on history in connection with that institution; to which proposal he was obliged to send the following reply:—

"Villa Nova, Blackrock, Dublin,

"November 7, 1873.

"MY DEAR DR. WOODLOCK,

"It would be out of my power to enter on the matter proposed in your kind note, as the extensive and

laborious literary works on which I am at present engaged tax all my energies to the utmost, and even occupy all my extra official hours.

“ Believe me to be,  
 “ Yours very sincerely,  
 “ J. T. GILBERT.”

He was, indeed, overworked, and much in need of the few days' holiday which he stole from his labours at Southampton, and enjoyed with his friend Denis Florence MacCarthy at Bournemouth.

*From the Diary of D. F. MacCarthy.*

“ 1874.

“ *April 12.*—Gilbert called and asked me to walk over to Villa Nova and look at the proofs of the ‘Selections from Irish Manuscripts,’ edited by him under the direction of the Master of the Rolls. Exquisite letters, etc., from the ‘Book of Kells.’ Stopped to dine with him and his sisters.

“ *April 14.*—W. K. Sullivan being in town, Gilbert sent me a card, asking me to dine with him at Villa Nova. . . . Very agreeable evening.

“ *August 9.*—Dined at J. J. MacCarthy's with Gilbert, A. O'Hagan, Fr. Meehan, P. J. Smyth, M.P., Charles Hart, Dr. Joyce, Edward Fottrell, to meet Sir Charles Gavan Duffy. Gilbert and I left him at the Shelbourne Hotel.

“ *August 17.*—Philippa Gilbert called and pressed me to go and dine at Villa Nova.”

“ On the 19th of September in this year,” writes Mr. John MacCarthy, “ Mr. Gilbert and my father went on a few days' trip together to Bournemouth, the New Forest, and the Isle of Wight. This tour is referred to in some letters, from which the following are extracts:—



“United Hotel, Charles Street, St. James’s, London,  
“Sunday, September 20, 1874.

“I arrived here from Manchester about 6 o’clock last evening, and found Gilbert still staying in the hotel. We have just been to Farm Street church, and he has gone to pay some visits at Kensington. . . . He is urging me to go to Oxford or the south coast for a few days. I feel a strong inclination to return home at once; but as I am here, I shall probably join him in this excursion, which indeed we both want.”

“Belle Vue Hotel, Bournemouth,  
“September 23, 1874.

“Gilbert and I spent a very agreeable day, on yesterday, in visiting some interesting places in the neighbourhood of this attractive watering-place. We went by train in about ten minutes to Christchurch, a small town four or five miles off, to visit the noble Priory Church there. As I enclose two photographs of this ancient structure, I need not attempt any description of it. It contains a number of monuments—seven marble slabs and an elaborate cenotaph of Shelley, erected to his memory by his son, Sir Percy Shelley, who lives in this neighbourhood. I enclose a photograph of this also, which gives a pretty good idea of the monument. After visiting the church, Gilbert and I walked down by the meadows to the river Stour, where we crossed by a ferry and walked back by Boscombe, where we saw the residence of Sir Percy Shelley—a large but not particularly attractive looking mansion. We then visited a mineral spring, or spa, close to the sea, and returned to Bournemouth by the strand—a rather fatiguing walk, as the sand was very soft and dry. I asked for the Catholic church here, and was directed to a magnificent building called St. Peter’s, to which a very lofty tower has just been added. This is the great Ritualistic church of the town, the rector being, I believe, the well-known Rev. Mr. Bennett. In the grounds about the church, which are beautifully laid out as a cemetery, there

are a considerable number of graves, almost every one of which has a white marble cross, some of them resembling our own dear one at Glasnevin. Among the graves which had not a cross was a large one, surrounded by a hedge of ivy, in which are the remains of William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, removed from St. Pancras' Cemetery, London, by their grandson, Sir Percy Shelley, as well as those of his mother, the poet's wife. Close to this I came, to my great surprise, upon a rather plain headstone erected to the memory of the wife of Daniel MacCarthy, Esq., and daughter of the late Admiral Sir H. Popham, who died July 3, 1847, aged forty years. The hotel where we are staying is nicely situated close to the sea and the pier. It is the hotel at which Aubrey de Vere always stops in his annual visit, and, by a curious accident, I occupy his room. He left Bournemouth about a fortnight ago. Gilbert has to remain here until he receives an official letter from Southampton, which he expects by every post. Our movements after that are uncertain."

## CHAPTER X

1874-1875

Proposal to abolish the office of Secretary to the Public Record Office, Ireland—Letters.

IN 1874 the proposal to abolish the position of Secretary of the Public Record Office in Ireland was first mooted, giving occasion for the following correspondence :—

*From J. T. Gilbert, Secretary of the Public Record Office, Dublin, to Sir Thomas Duffus Hardy, Deputy Keeper of the Public Record Office, London.*

“ January 9, 1874.

“ MY DEAR SIR THOMAS,

“ The Treasury have expressed their opinion to the Master of the Rolls that the office of Secretary here should be abolished, and that the official duties now belonging to the post should be assigned to the Assistant Deputy Keeper.

“ The proposed abolition is entirely against the views of the Master of the Rolls, who, on public grounds, would regard it as a grave calamity to the Department, totally irrespective of the present holder of the post. Their lordships name no date for abolition, and as there is a very strong feeling among some of those of the highest rank in Ireland on the subject, it is perhaps possible that it may not be carried out in my time, but that some arrangement as to editing may be conjoined with the office, as hinted at by the Treasury committee of inquiry, and approved of by the Master of the Rolls.

“Perhaps you would kindly let me have your views on the matter. It appears difficult to see how anything in the way of publication could be undertaken with so small a staff as assistant-keeper, two first-class clerks, and six second-class. With the sanction of the Master of the Rolls, I have applied to the present Lord Lieutenant, who appointed me when last here, asking him to move the Treasury that I may not be disturbed.

“Any advice you will give me in this matter will be very gratefully received by

“Yours very sincerely,

“J. T. GILBERT.”

*From the Same to the Same.*

“Villa Nova, Blackrock, February 5, 1874.

“MY DEAR SIR THOMAS,

“Thinking that you would like to hear as to the Treasury committee of inquiry on this office, I enclose a copy of the portion of the draft report which would be most likely hereafter to be applied to your Department.

“The draft report was submitted to the Deputy Keeper for his concurrence, but he has declined to agree to the portions which state that the Secretary could be done without,<sup>1</sup> and that the duties are slight. The Master of the Rolls, when the report comes before him, as head of the Department, will, I believe, speak even more strongly than the Deputy Keeper on those points.

“The present remuneration of Secretary and Assistant Keeper is equal. It is proposed to give an increase to each and to put the other officers on the same scale as those in your Department. This, so far as the Secretary is concerned, would appear scarcely equitable, as while others were advanced to the full London scale, he would be much under it, and, moreover, have new duties imposed upon him.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.

“I write to-day to the Secretary of the committee at the Treasury, Mr. G. W. Hamilton, directing attention to this point, and suggesting that the committee may perhaps think well of reconsidering their draft proposal with respect to amount of salary for combined duties of Secretary and Editor of Record Publications. I mention to him that the Treasury was good enough in 1870 (in a letter to Lord Romilly) to write that in their lordships’ opinion I possessed very special and exceptional fitness for record work such as they now propose that I should undertake.

“The committee, I believe, is anxious to do what is right, and I hope they will consult some competent record authorities before they finally decide. I shall be greatly obliged if you will kindly advise me in this matter.

“Yours very sincerely,

“J. T. GILBERT.”

*From J. T. Gilbert to the Right Hon. Edward Sullivan, Master of the Rolls in Ireland.*

“Villa Nova, Blackrock, February 5, 1874.

“DEAR MASTER OF THE ROLLS,

“When the draft report of the Treasury committee comes before your honour, as head of their Department, I beg that you will afford me an opportunity of submitting for your consideration some observations on those parts of it which refer to the Secretary and his office.

“Your honour’s faithful servant,

“J. T. GILBERT.

“P.S.—I should have mentioned that the draft report is a confidential document. I have given the names of the committee at the end of the copy of the extract.

“J. T. G.”

*From J. T. Gilbert to Sir T. D. Hardy.*

“Public Record Office of Ireland,  
 “Four Courts, Dublin,  
 “July 22, 1874.

“MY DEAR SIR THOMAS,

“The report of the committee of inquiry into this office, of which you heard some time ago, has since been submitted by the Treasury to the Master of the Rolls in Ireland. I am informed that his honour, after careful consideration of the subject, has objected in the strongest manner to the abolition of the office of Secretary. He would approve of the proposal of the committee that literary or editorial work should be considered as part of the Secretary's official duties. The recommendation of the Master of the Rolls, if carried out, will effect what I think you always considered (for the interest of the public service) should eventually be done here, and I would ask you, if the matter comes before you, to give it such support as it merits.

“I hope to be in England in September and October next, and to have the pleasure of seeing you there.

“Meanwhile I remain,

“Very sincerely yours,

“J. T. GILBERT.”

*From the Same to the Same.*

“Dublin, July 24, 1874.

“MY DEAR SIR THOMAS,

“The only portions of the report of which I have a full copy are those which relate to the Secretary. The enclosures will explain themselves in conjunction with the extract from the report which I sent you some time since.

“I will give you more of such other matters in the report as are likely to interest you. You will observe that the Master of the Rolls has spoken very decidedly as to the

Secretaryship, and his views will be strongly supported in Parliament, if not carried out.

“Very sincerely yours,  
“J. T. GILBERT.”

*From Sir T. D. Hardy.*

“Rolls House, London, July 28, 1874.

“MY DEAR GILBERT,

“I have carefully read and considered the remarks of the Master of the Rolls of Ireland and your Deputy Keeper ; both are admirable, and, I think, irresistible respecting the non-abolition of the office of Secretary. I know it would be wholly impossible to do away with the office on this side of the water, and I firmly believe it would be both injudicious and prejudicial to abrogate the Treasury minute creating the place. When the Irish Public Record Act was passed, the office of Secretary was not mentioned in the Act, and I had several interviews with Mr. G. A. Hamilton on the subject of the omission, and I have just reason to believe that what I then urged on the necessity of having a secretary was the cause of the Treasury minute being made. I scarcely agree with his honour that the Secretary ought to be editor-general of all record works, for if many were undertaken, the whole of his time would be occupied in editing.

“Ever sincerely yours,  
“T. DUFFUS HARDY.”

*From J. T. Gilbert to Dr. W. K. Sullivan,  
President, Queen's College, Cork.*

“Villa Nova, Blackrock, Co. Dublin,  
“January, 1875.

“MY DEAR SULLIVAN,

“Many thanks for your note. The matter referred to is shortly this. The Treasury, in opposition to the distinctly stated opinion, both of the Master of the Rolls, head

of the Record Department, and the Deputy Keeper (S. Ferguson), have decided that the office of Secretary, which, as you know, I hold, should be abolished, and its duties discharged by the Assistant Deputy Keeper, Mr. Latouche, who is to be paid £100 a year additional to his salary on this condition, and to commence on the completion of the abolition of the Secretary. For the latter (the completion of the abolition) no date is named, but we may assume it is intended to come on at any moment.

“The Master of the Rolls is very indignant at the matter, and has authorized me to say so, and pledges himself to do all he can for the maintenance of the post, the abolition of which he considers a serious blow to the Department. I saw the Duke of Leinster on yesterday, and he expresses himself as equally opposed to the measure, and offered his best services in the warmest manner. He suggested that a statement should be drawn up, signed by about 12 of the most important people in Ireland, appealing to the Government not to carry out the design, and he will himself go with it, and a deputation of 3 or 4 to the Lord Lieutenant, as on public grounds, totally irrespective of the individual. It will take some days to get all this done. Meanwhile I have addressed an official letter, myself, to Sir M. Hicks-Beach, by authority of the Master of the Rolls. I have asked Sir M. H.-B. to bring the matter under the notice of Lord Abercorn (by whom I was appointed), and to move him to request the Treasury to reconsider the matter, and to leave me undisturbed so long as I perform the duties satisfactorily.

“You now see how matters stand, and I want you to give me all the aid in your power, and in every important quarter you can, at once.

“It is most annoying to be treated in this way, just as some of the fruits of one’s long labours are approaching maturity. The first part of the National Manuscripts will be published in a few days. The appearance of this splendid volume ought to influence public opinion in my favour.

“If I can I will send you by this post a copy of an



account of the first part, of which (the account) a small number has been printed. Now, like a good friend, set your pen to work in such way among your most influential acquaintances as will be likely to give a check to the move, the sources of which you will probably guess at.

“With kind remembrance from us all here to you all at Cork,

“I am, yours ever,

“J. T. GILBERT.”

Notwithstanding the anxiety occasioned by the threatened abolition of the Secretaryship of the Public Record Office, Dublin, Gilbert continued to carry on with spirit his duties in that position, together with his many other undertakings, during the period that elapsed before the completion of the abolition.

*From Dr. Samuel Rawson Gardiner.*

“January 22.

“I am very anxious to procure a dispassionate opinion on Brewer’s new volume of the ‘Carew Papers,’ dealing with the plantations of Munster and Ulster. It would give me great pleasure if you would allow me to send you the volume.

“Any sort of literary intelligence such as you mention will be very welcome to us, and if you can suggest to us any historical work appearing in Ireland as worth noticing, we should be very glad to hear of it. Perhaps you would let us have notices of the National Manuscripts as they appear.”

*From the Same.*

“February 10.

“I have no doubt that the editor (Dr. Appleton) will be delighted to have the aid of Mr. MacCarthy. But as non-historical matters are out of my special department, perhaps the best way would be for you to ask him what sort of books he would like to take, whether general literature of all periods, or only that of Calderon’s contemporaries.”

*From Denis Florence MacCarthy.*

“February 12.

“I am very much obliged to you for writing to your London friend on the literary matter you so kindly suggested to me. The Department of Spanish Poetry, in which I have always been most interested, is that of the Drama, not exclusively of Calderon’s time, but of his predecessors and followers. There is, however, no form in which Spanish poetry has found an expression that is altogether unknown to me, so that there is no necessity to limit the discretion of the editor to any particular period or subject.”

*From Dr. S. R. Gardiner.*

“March 31.

“If you thought you could help us with an article on the two Calendars together, say, in three or four months’ time, we should be extremely obliged. Brewer’s view that the Irish were not injured by the Ulster Colony is, I believe, new, and I should be very glad to see an estimate of its value.”

*From the Same.*

“April 8.

“Can you be kind enough to tell me of any one who would be able to give a fair opinion on Froude’s two volumes? Lecky’s name has been suggested to me, but I do not like to ask him before hearing from you, as you will know better than I do how far he is fitted.”

*From the Same.*

“May 19.

“I have sent you the first volume of the ‘*Monasticon Hibernicum*,’ thinking that you might let us have a short note about it when you are at leisure, reserving a further notice for the appearance of the whole work.”

*From W. H. Hardinge.*

“ May 10.

“ I feel much gratified in acknowledging receipt of sixth report (1874) of the Public Records of Ireland. The steady progress-making in the transfer to, and arrangement of, the records in the Public Record Office is, to me, very satisfactory ; but your clear, improving, and welcome report announcement of the first part of the ‘ Facsimiles of National Manuscripts of Ireland ’ contained in the volume claims admiration, respect, and gratitude. To say the truth, I did not give a British Government credit for becoming the instrument of the publication of ecclesiastical and lay history which places old Erin among the most enlightened, learned, and Christian nations existing from 34 to 800 A.D., and which also shows that she was no insignificant Isle from the time of Isaiah to the birth of the Lord and Saviour.

“ I have great hopes that the friendly intercourse of the nations of the present day and the love and labour of archæological explorers will, by successful discoveries, enable you to add more and substantial evidence to that which you have given through your new and unquestionable testimony to the condition of our countrymen and their institutions preceding the ‘ light of other days, ’ which your energy and ability has so happily revealed.

“ I shall look forward with anxiety to open and feast upon the first part of the Facsimiles.”

*From J. T. Gilbert to Lord Talbot de Malahide.*

“ April 21, 1874.

“ I received your note on yesterday, and at once arranged with Hodges and Foster to forward to you the three volumes of the Brehon Laws Commission. If you will kindly indicate to me the portions of the transactions wanted by the Lisbon Academy, I shall have them forwarded through Quaritch as soon as possible.

“The Portuguese celts you mention would be very interesting for comparison with the Irish ones in our Museum.

“I should feel very much obliged if you would give me a reference to any good specimen of the writing of the Duke or Duchess of Tyrconnell of 1688, or of Archbishop Peter Talbot, such as you would think suitable for the series of ‘Facsimiles of the National Manuscripts of Ireland’ on which I am engaged.”

*From J. O. Westwood.*

“Oxford, November 7.

“I am greatly obliged to you for getting me a copy of the paper on the Ardagh Chalice. It is a wonderful piece. I think it older than Lord Dunraven puts it. I had the pleasure of seeing the ‘Book of Kells’ at the British Museum a few days ago. They have photographed the great Xpi, so that we shall have three copies of that page. I am trying to get a publisher for a second (companion) volume to my big book. I do not know whether to put more A. Sax. and Irish Manuscripts into it, or confine it to Continental examples. When is there a chance of the continuation of the R.I.A. Catalogue with the ecclesiastical articles? There needs *another* plate, with the ornamental details carefully worked out, of the Ardagh Cup.”

*From D. H. Kelly.*

“Araghty Grange, Fuerty, Roscommon,

“October 24.

“Thanks for your note. My translation of the  $\text{b}\mu\text{w}\text{z}\mu\text{w}$   $\text{r}\alpha\text{C}\text{o}\text{z}\alpha$  (about which, I suppose, Hennessy wrote to you) is still in a very inchoate condition, and will require much before it could go to press. *Imprimis*, the text I worked upon is copied from the Ordnance Survey Letters, and would require collation with the original. *In secundis*, there is one portion which refers to  $\text{S}\eta\alpha\text{b}\ \text{Q}\eta\alpha\lambda\alpha\mu$ , and which I suspect

really belongs to the text on the  $\text{b}111311 \text{ } \text{d}4 \text{ } \text{c}04134$ , which, if I mistake not, was situated in the vicinity of that mountain in Wicklow or Dublin, and not in Westmeath. In the third place, I must look up the history of the period and get informed about sundry localities.

“Fourthly, I should like to have extracts from the Brehon Laws, or other equally reliable authority, anent Ballybiatach’s. Fifthly, identification of places named. If all these were accomplished, and Hennessy would let his  $\text{d}4 \text{ } \text{c}04134$  run in couples with my  $\text{d}4 \text{ } \text{c}034$ , they might make an interesting little bit of history, throwing a bright light on Celtic hospitality, and which would not be unworthy of a place in the R.I.A.’s Fasciculus. If you would let me know the result of the Board of Works’ communication, and whether the Museum has a chance of being completed, I would take it as a great favour.”

*From Henry O’Neill.*

“109, Lower Gardiner Street, Dublin,

“January 2, 1875.

“From the time I issued the first part of my work on the Crosses till now, rumours have reached me that, being only an artist, I have produced an artistic publication, it is true, but one wanting in that accuracy which an antiquarian requires. Even the R.I. Academy has not scrupled to charge me with resorting to unworthy personalities instead of something of antiquarian value in the text of that work, and, still later, the authors of the ancient inscriptions now publishing by the Kilkenny Arch. Society have published in their prospectus the injurious assertion that the inscriptions I have published in my work, *being in perspective*, are of little value to the antiquarian—the fact being that there is only one inscription in perspective, that to the Kilamery Cross, and that inscription I have given in the text. I enclose a letter from Mr. Doolin respecting the correctness of my prints. I would be extremely sorry to descend to personalities

against any man, and feel that the statement in the Academy's Catalogue, and that by Mr. Stokes and Dr. Reeves, is not alone painful to me, but, I need hardly say, being incorrect, are unworthy of those who made them. Possibly with this you have nothing to do, but I think it may be well to place in your hands Mr. Doolin's letter, as it will refute the erroneous statements respecting my prints of the sculptured crosses."

*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

"November 6, 1874.

"I suppose that your grand Fasciculus of Irish Manuscripts will soon be published. It ought to attract great notice and be very much prized as an important authority in one branch of palæography. Pray tell me, is the second part of the 'Leabhar Breac' yet published? The 'Book of Leinster' is prospering, I hope, in your hands. Have you seen Whitley Stokes' printed letter to Prof. Jellett upon the reproduction of this manuscript?"

*From J. T. Gilbert to Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

"Villa Nova, Blackrock, November 7, 1874.

"MY DEAR REEVES,

"I am very glad to hear from you after so long an interval.

"I return with many thanks the paper on Maellongte you were kind enough to lend me. 'Leabhar Breac' is completed so far as the lithograph, and you will soon be asked to look at the proofs of the Title and Contents, now in the publisher's hands. When all completed and bound, it will be a very impressive monument of old Ireland. Do you remember any old references to 'Leabhar Breac'? It appears singular that Colgan and the Four Masters, and others of their day, should not have said something about it, but I cannot find that they did. I am delighted to hear that you

are again thinking of the Bangor Antiphonary. I see no difficulty whatever in the way of its publication. When you are ready to go on, pray let me know, and I will go into all details with you.

“The ‘Book of Leinster’ is steadily progressing.

“By some mischance Whitley Stokes’ letter to Jellett has not reached me. If you will lend me your copy you will much oblige, and I will return it speedily. At the same time, pray let me know if you have received the Fourth Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission. It is about fifty pages, with a separate index of about two hundred pages. If you have not got it, I will try to supply the deficiency. I hope soon to be able to send you the first part of the ‘Facsimiles of National Manuscripts of Ireland,’ some copies of which are in the binder’s hands. Did you hear of the strange voyage of the ‘Book of Kells,’ and the consequent disturbance about it?

“Yours very sincerely,

“J. T. GILBERT.”

*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

“November 13, 1874.

“I thank you for your letter and its enclosure.<sup>1</sup> I wonder what craze could have led the Librarian to treat the ‘Book of Kells’ to such a trip. What would Todd say to such an act?

“Thank you for your kind offer about Report Four of the Manuscripts Commission. But I can save you on this occasion, for my Lord Enniskillen presented it to the Library, and there I have full use of it.

“You ask me about the ‘Leabhar Breac,’ whether I know any references to it among the old Masters. Well, indeed, I do not. Todd, in treating of the hymn *Audite Omnes* in his ‘*Lib. Hymn. fascic.*,’ speaks of the copy in the ‘Leabhar Breac’ as one which is not included in Colgan’s enumeration.”

<sup>1</sup> An article on the removal of the ‘Book of Kells,’ which had appeared in the Dublin newspapers.

*From E. Maunde Thompson.*

“British Museum, London, November 2, 1874.

“We have the ‘Book of Kells,’ but T.C.D. has taken fright and ordered it back.”

During these years of many various labours, Gilbert still kept up his active work as Hon. Secretary to the Irish Archæological and Celtic Society, and continued to respond to the innumerable appeals from all sides for his help and sympathy in the historical and antiquarian undertakings of others. Few of his generous replies have been preserved, but the letters of request and acknowledgment speak to the point. It is difficult to make selection from the mass of such evidence which is before the biographer.

*From Sir W. R. W. Wilde.*

“January 26 [1874].

“In looking over my books, I find the old *Icelandic Chronicle* which you were good enough to lend me some years ago, which I did not know I had until I found your name in it this day. You must excuse me for having kept it so long, and blame yourself for not having nudged my memory about it before this.

“Can you tell me whether the Market Cross of Dublin was ever engraved, and where?”

“I have been in great want of Mason’s ‘History of St. Patrick’s.’ It is not at present in the Library, R.I.A., and the notice of its borrower cannot be found.

“You that are so learned might tell me, if you liked, where to find an account of the first introduction of cast bells for steeple ringing.

“You will be glad to hear that, looking for materials for Beranger, I discovered those of Austin Cooper and his book of drawings made in 1778.”



*From the Same.*

"February 10.

"We are asking a few old friends upon Moytura cheer on Thursday, and also to cheer dear old Oscar on having obtained the Berkeley gold medal last week with great honour. You were always a favourite of his, and he hopes you will come."

*From the Same.*

"March 11.

"Huband Smith has just been here looking after one of the Beranger books he lent me, and which you already saw. He bought it cheap from some bookseller on the Quays many years ago. He also says he wants it because Mr. Cooper is anxious to buy it. Now, I think it ought to be purchased by the Academy, and made public property. The Academy can afford more than Mr. Cooper would be willing to give for it."

*From the Same.*

"June 16.

"Signor Morani called here yesterday, and I have asked him to dine on Thursday with a few old friends on a boiled leg of mutton—no party, as I am all alone.

"I have applied to the National Board Commissioners for permission to erect the monument to the 'Four Masters' in their Lawn, but have not yet got a reply. As we have been refused the space opposite to the Mater Hospital, I have been thinking that the intermediate open space between SS. Michael and John's Chapel and the Quays would be a good site for the monument, but we must first ask the Corporation to fix a site.

"Now I must get your help in the matter of my lecture upon Irish anthropology at Belfast, especially with regard to the Milesian race. I am reading Sullivan's book on the ethnology of the Irish, but he altogether ignores my investigations thirty years ago."

*From the Same.*

" July 16.

" It is an age since I saw you, and I have lots of things to speak to you about. I am sure you were glad to hear of Oscar's great success at Oxford.<sup>1</sup>

" The National Board will not give us a site for the Four Masters' monument in their Lawn, so we will have to put up our cross in the space opposite SS. Michael and John's Chapel, as I see no better locality. J. J. MacCarthy has promised to draft a cross,<sup>2</sup> value about £120, and then I hope we will have another little evening meeting of those who have been here before.

" I have been reading vol. i. of Sullivan's ' Commentary on O'Curry,' and have a great deal to say upon the subject.

" I must have a long chat with you respecting the address at Belfast. The Milesians are my great historic difficulty. Such a lot of bosh has been written about them."

*From the Same.*

" July 26.

" Come and dine to-morrow to meet the Five Masters M'Carthy, O'Donnell and Co."

In this year Wilde's health began to decline. In November, he writes—

" I have been very unwell. You might give me a call, as you know I can always see you in my buff, or get you up to my den. I am not up to dining at the Club. Procure me an early copy of the address, and come and tell me about it. Dr. Petrie ought to have been President, if Todd, Graves, Jellett, and others had not to be first provided for. Whose fault was all that? You know, and will, I hope, tell it some day before we meet in Paradise."

<sup>1</sup> His winning the Newdigate Prize at Oxford.

<sup>2</sup> Finally erected in the pleasure ground opposite the Mater Misericordiæ Hospital, Eccles Street, Dublin.

*From the Same.*

“December 27.

“Can you refer me to any illustrations of the Palace of the Archbishops of Dublin in Kevin Street and at Tallaght? Are there any references in your ‘History of Dublin’ to these structures? Besides the illustrations, I am anxious to know when these buildings passed from their ecclesiastical to secular uses.

“I have at last seen the book of ancient drawings containing some of Beranger’s, now in the possession of Huband Smith. I have just got upon the second of a couple of valuable antiquities for the Academy, one a rare form of gold fibula. When they are presented, I wish some of the officers would make such an exhibition thereof as would, by publication throughout the country, induce parties finding similar articles to send them to our museum. You may depend upon it that, irrespective of the vanity and egotism of the describer, the description of such articles will conduce to the increase of the museum.”

*From John Finlayson.*

“60, Baggot Street, Dublin,

“Thursday, December 10, 1874.

“May I ask whether you have yet been able to lay your hand on ‘Lombard’s Tablet’ in Christ Church? If you have, I shall feel greatly obliged by your giving me a copy of it. . . . I have just ascertained that the *last* payment made at Strongbow’s tomb was in 1871, the head of the warrior serving as *table* on which the receipt was signed. Mr. John Sweeney, one of our sextons (from whom I had the information), supplied the pen and ink from the Vicar’s robing-room and received two and sixpence gratuity for his attendance.”

*From Hans C. Hamilton.*

“Public Record Office, London,

“January 18, 1875.

“I have before me, while I am writing, the original letter of Hughe Tirone to the Lord Deputy of Ireland, dated the 22nd of December, 1602, inclosed in a holograph letter from the Lord Deputy Mountjoy to Secretary Sir Robert Cecil, dated ‘Athlone, 8 January, 1602-3.’

“There never was any doubt, either among friends or enemies, of the ability and bravery of Hughe Tirone. Here is a genuine letter of which there can be no doubt, and I should think it is the most preferable of any to be photozincographed.

“There is also a submission of the 18 of October inclosed in the letter from the Lord Deputy and Council to Burghley, of 30 October, 1595. This has Tirone’s signature.

“Here also is an undoubted autograph of Aodh O’donill (Hugh O’Donnell) on one page only.

“I have also before me Tirone’s submission of 22 December, 1597, inclosed in Sir G. Fenton’s letter to Cecil of December 26.”

*From the Same.*

“July 6, 1875.

“When I saw you in England you spoke of a narrative of the Ulster rebellion by an Irishman, which you were proposing to publish. Can you tell me if it has yet been printed? I am working just now at Wentworth’s ‘Government,’ and such a narrative, though not directly bearing upon the matter, would be very valuable as illustrating the temper and feeling of the Irish.

“If not printed, is it on the way to being printed? If not, would it suit our Camden Society?

“I suppose you cannot help me to any new material about Wentworth beyond what is in the Record Office? Anything about the proposed Connaught plantation would be specially welcome.”

## CHAPTER XI

1874-1878

Abolition of the office of Secretary to the Public Record Office, Ireland  
—Illness of Gilbert—Recovery and return to work—Facsimiles of  
the National Manuscripts of Ireland—Letters.

A CRISIS in Gilbert's life was now at hand. The Treasury had resolved on an economic step in reducing the staff of the Public Record Office, Ireland, and ruled that a Deputy Keeper with a certain number of clerks was sufficient for a "provincial" establishment. It had been their intention, when reducing the staff of the Public Record Office in Dublin, to exclude the office of Secretary, which, however, had been created on the urgent representations of Sir Thomas Duffus Hardy. The economic spirit now asserted itself again, and, after the peculiar necessity and importance of the post in Ireland had been proved by eight years of invaluable work done by Gilbert, the order was given to abolish the office of Secretary to the Public Record Office in Ireland. A memorial signed by a large number of the most influential names in Ireland was of no avail, and it was made known that the abolition was to be effected.

On January 4, 1875, Gilbert wrote to Sir Edward Sullivan—

"MY DEAR MASTER OF THE ROLLS,

"I need not say that the resolution as to the office of Secretary is most unwelcome intelligence. Present abolition would be attended with complications which I cannot contemplate without great uneasiness."

There was, indeed, the most serious cause for uneasiness. In addition to the apparent destruction of the projects for noble work to be accomplished through the medium of an office which practically unlocked for him all the receptacles of hidden documentary treasure concerning his country, he had to contemplate the even more afflicting reverse of fortune to those he loved. Having before his entrance into the Record Office finally severed his connection with the lucrative business of his grandfather and father, he had taken on himself the chief support of his mother and sisters, largely sacrificing pecuniary considerations to pursue those moderately remunerated labours, a desire for the achievement of which was the passion of his life ; and it now appeared that he had thus injured the delicate sisters who depended on him.

Under a blow so doubly crushing, no wonder that his health gave way. Buoyant spirits and genial humour had enabled him to support the long strain of incessant labours hardly relaxed from boyhood, and the ardour of his hope and his love of work, even for work's sake, had hitherto carried him over all obstacles where even less sensitive natures might naturally have broken down. But the catastrophe of this year, coming as an unexpected climax to overstrain, seriously affected his nervous system. A fever of anxiety was followed by a physical and mental depression with which he battled for a considerable time, fulfilling all his duties and carrying on the work of the National Manuscripts ; but at last he yielded to the advice of physicians and friends, and consented to spend a year abroad under medical care, removed from the associations with, and sources of his misfortune.

Sir William Wilde, himself unwell at the time, wrote from Moytura, Mayo—

“You are a nasty old crocodile not to have written me a line since we parted. I think it is exceedingly wrong of you not to have gone away for a while as I entreated of you, as did also your special medical adviser. Do tell me or get

your sisters to write, what has been done in the matter of the office."

Dr. Hayden wrote to Mary Gilbert—

"I am glad to hear your brother has been induced to go away for a while. I expect the journey, change of scene and of society, will do him much good."

Denis Florence MacCarthy came close to him as a brother in the hour of trial. Mary Gilbert writes to the poet—

"A hundred thousand thanks for your kind and most welcome letter. It gave comfort and consolation to us all, even to poor J. T. I read it aloud to him, and he afterwards got it to read it for himself. It was so grateful to his sad heart to find sympathy from one whom he values so much. I asked him what you could do for him. He said, 'Many things ; but they would all be of no use.'"

At such a crisis in life a man comes to know who are his real friends, and Gilbert had experience of this fact in some of the minor circumstances in which his failure of health involved him. His friend and medical adviser, Dr. Hayden, a member of the Royal Irish Academy, wrote to Miss Gilbert at this trying period—

"I am glad to tell you his friends mustered in force last night, and that if there was an attempt made to disturb him in the Academy—which I doubt there was, except, perhaps, on the part of a few individuals—it was unsuccessful. He retains his office of Honorary Librarian."

Another true friend wrote at this moment—

*From D. F. MacCarthy.*

"4, Charlotte Street, Bedford Square, London, W.C.,

"February 27, 1875.

"DEAR MISS GILBERT,

"I really cannot tell you how grieved I am to read the sad account which you give me of my dear friend's health. It is really intolerable that to serve some petty private purpose, or to effect some paltry saving, a career of

such activity and credit to the country should be interrupted. I can feel complete sympathy with him in his disappointment at the prospect of being severed from an institution the necessity for which was mainly pointed out by himself, and to which his learning, his talent, and his industry would have contributed such valuable assistance. I cannot think, however, if this project of retrenchment is carried out, that with such eminent claims as he undoubtedly possesses, and with his host of influential friends, some arrangement in the way of compensation will not be made, which, however below his merits, may not be unworthy of his acceptance. With regard to his health, I think the worst is now over. In resuming his usual habits, I have every hope he will soon regain that activity of mind and cheerfulness of spirits that were so characteristic of him. Let me know how yourself and your dear sister are? It is doubly distressing that all this additional anxiety should come upon you when, to a certain extent, you were both somewhat weakened by recent illness. You must resume all your planting and improvements at dear Villa Nova, which I hope to see in all its springtide beauty in April, if I survive in this dismal desert of London until then. Florence and John join me in kindest regards.

“Ever yours,

“D. F. MACCARTHY.”

On St. Patrick's Day of the same year, MacCarthy writes to Mary Gilbert—

“I wish I could thank you in my best way for your ever-welcome and never-forgotten gift of shamrocks, knowing as I do the great and pressing anxieties that you are experiencing at present. I could scarcely have expected, however much I might have wished, that this year you would have renewed a kindness to which I have been accustomed so long. It is all the more welcome, however, on that account, and I wish most sincerely that, in thanking you for it, I could strive to write something that might possibly cheer a little your depression and my own. To-day is black, cold, and harsh



here, and if you have the same weather in Ireland, I question very much if it would do J. T. any great good to leave his own fireside and books for a journey either to London or Cork."

*From Sir Thomas Duffus Hardy.*

"London, October 25, 1875.

"DEAR MISS GILBERT,

"I assure you it was with the deepest sorrow I heard of your brother's sad indisposition and its cause, but I was in hope that by this time both would have been removed.

"I will take care that the reason of his not sending in his report to the Commissioners of the Historical Manuscripts shall be explained to the Commission.

"Hoping that he will be very speedily restored to health,

"Believe me to be very faithfully yours,

"T. DUFFUS HARDY."

While his friends were thus striving to ward off a blow which was much more destructive to archivist efforts in Ireland than (as it proved) to Gilbert's individual career, the man who could hardly be induced to take holiday of a week from his multifarious engagements, left Dublin with a heavy heart to seek renewal of health in idleness and change of scene under circumstances which precluded him from the enjoyment of leisure and freedom from work. For more than a year his vigorous constitution struggled against the threats of disease. During his absence from home, his eldest and long-invalided sister, Eleanor, died; Philippa, the second sister, rapidly declined in health; and Mary, while soothing the dying moments of one and tending the sick-bed of another, followed in spirit the footsteps of the absent brother, for her devotion to whom she had been likened by their friends to the tender and strong-hearted Eugénie de Guérin. "I have a pain in my brother's side," wrote Eugénie to the suffering Maurice; and akin to that unselfish love was the ardour of sympathy with

which Mary Gilbert cared for one who was as painfully removed from reach of her personal service.

Among the intimate friends in whom Mary confided in this time of sorrow were Denis Florence MacCarthy, Dr. W. K. Sullivan, Dr. Charles W. Russell, President of Maynooth College, and Dr. R. R. Madden ; but it would be impossible to enumerate the friends and comrades in work, by whom her brother was beloved and admired, who poured out their sympathy to the devoted sister in letters which remain to attest his power of winning tender affection. That Gilbert, the indomitable in conquering difficulties, the irrepressible in play of good humour, and the sanguine in spirit, should have broken down in the early prime of life, seemed incredible to those who knew him well, till the long strain of labour, beset with peculiar difficulties, was called to mind. The grief of MacCarthy for his friend was little less intense than that of Mary herself, and to him she poured out her sorrow in letters too sacred for publication, but which would of themselves form a deeply interesting human document. The poet had from very early days been the familiar friend of the Gilbert family, associated with their summer enjoyments and winter festivities. "I am longing to sit under the broad leafy limes at Villa Nova, where I always fancy myself again in Vallombrosa," he writes in one of his numerous letters which prove that within the sad cloud which now wrapped the once happy home MacCarthy's faithful friendship struck roots even deeper than before. It was he who broke to Gilbert in his absence the news of the death of his unswerving friend of many years, Sir William Wilde, an event which affected Gilbert very keenly ; and he was the first to whom Mary wrote of a fresh sorrow, in the cruel year of 1876, when Philippa was taken from her. "My beautiful sister died this morning," writes Mary to MacCarthy in her now complete desolation.

In MacCarthy's diary for 1875-6 there are many references to the troubles in the Gilbert family. His first entry on the subject runs : "Met the Miss Gilberts in the Avenue. After some hesitation they told me of the contemplated changes in

the Record Office. Greatly surprised and grieved." More than a year later he records a communication from Mary at Brighton, where she had gone to meet her brother. "J. T. wonderfully well, holding a *levée* of his friends." Between the dates of these two entries MacCarthy's sympathy with his friends is evidenced by many a bit of writing in the diary, where is also preserved a letter from Dr. R. R. Madden to the poet:—

"You have no doubt heard of the death of Philippa Gilbert. It was very sad and sorrowful in its effects on the surviving sister. Few have ever been more sorely tried than she has been. She counts with apparent certainty on her brother's perfect restoration to health, and of his return home within a few weeks, at most, to engage in his old pursuits; and is frequently putting his books in order, that he may find them as he left them. No one can more ardently desire his recovery than I do."

Further notes in MacCarthy's diary record Gilbert's return to home and work, thoroughly reinvigorated and in excellent spirits.

"*May 22, 1877.*—A card from J. T. on Saturday, containing an extract about Major Swan, a joke upon my *Cygnus Expirans*" [a poem which appeared in the *Month* of March and April, 1872.] "Sent a card in reply."

"*May 28.*—*Freeman* and post-card from G. Sent four lines of a squib in reply to J. T.'s quotation from Swift."

"*June 4.*—Long and interesting letter from G.—full of jokes and wit."

"*June 9.*—Sent copies of an announcement in the *Academy* that Mr. Gilbert had returned to Dublin quite restored to health, to Miss G. and Dr. Madden, from whom I had an interesting letter yesterday. Madden said—

"'Gilbert and his sister dined with us on Sunday. He looked well, ate well, punned as well as ever, and said he felt quite well.'"

"*June 11.*—Very amusing letter from G., inquiring as to

rare historical books in the British Museum. Worked up by John, and report sent to him."

"July 6.—Sent G. a book, 'The Adventures of Mr. Gilbert Go-a-head.'"

Letters of congratulation poured in upon him. The (Dowager) Marchioness of Ormonde, in her letter of July 7 of that year, writes—

"I am rejoiced to hear that you are completely restored to health, and trust that for many years you will enjoy it. I enclose a letter from my daughter, and you must allow me to express my warm thanks for your kindness in presenting me with that valuable and most interesting work. Nothing would please me better than to know that you were again superintending and directing the arrangement and binding of these Ormonde Manuscripts. I trust that they are in progress, and that you are satisfied with the manner in which it is all being executed."

*From Dr. Samuel Rawson Gardiner.*

"4, Gordon Street, London, W.C.,

"May, 26, 1877.

"I am indeed very glad to hear of your recovery, and that you are at work again for the benefit of all who interest themselves in history. I trust that some day you will be able to publish the manuscripts about the Ulster Rebellion, of which you gave me so interesting a description the last time that I saw you. I am gradually working on towards that event, so that I shall by-and-by have a special interest in it. I want also to thank you most heartily for offering to help us in the 'Academy.' We have no Irish books on hand, but when any come in I shall be very glad to be able to consult you about them. There is a 'History of Monaghan' by Evelyn Shirley, of which the first part appeared, and we had a short note on it, intending to devote an article to it when the whole was published. Perhaps you would like to undertake it when the time comes. As to Ware's Journal,

it belongs to Mrs. Carew, of Crowcombe Court, in Somersetshire. The greater part of the book consists of rough notes referring to Irish biography and Church history. In one place we have genealogy of the descendants of his father and mother. The next page has O'Connors of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Then comes the death of Sir James Crofts in 1590. Lists of Deans, Bishops, etc. The diary begins in this way—'Private Collections by Ja. W. stilo currenti 1623. Beginning 25 Mtii, Malcomb Hamilton, Chancellor of Downe, was consecrated Archbp. of Cashell.' After some further entries, 'On Munday following a daughter of the Lord Deputies was married to Edward Brabazon, a grandchild of the Lord Brabazon, in Christ Church, after sermon preached by Dr. Ja. Usher, Lo. Bp. of Meath.' The last entry is, '1647. January the 18th. The Counsell of Killkenny sent in agents or messengers to invite forraners to come invade this kingdom of Ireland, etc., etc.'

"Many thanks for the Introduction to the Irish photographed Manuscripts, which I received safely this morning."

The Rev. James Graves writes—

"Your kind letter and contents, so full of life and interest to me, gives me unmixed pleasure. I rejoice that our country will have the full services of one who, when trammelled with official work, was able to do so much for it. That you should complete the great work on the National Manuscripts of Ireland, the first grand volume of which would alone have been a monument for ever, is a glorious thing. I suppose you will now be able to have Lord Ormonde's Manuscripts bound and arranged for him."

*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

"May, 1877.

"We have each suffered a heavy bereavement. About six weeks ago I buried my fine boy Charlie, who had grown to be my curate here, and to be the admired and beloved of

all who knew him. He has left a widow and three children. After the publication of Part I. of the Facsimiles I had occasion to go to Cambridge, where I stayed with Bradshaw, the accomplished and earnest librarian, who was in great delight with the facsimiles, as affording him what he had long been seeking—a key to the ascertaining the age of early Irish writing. I have not heard for a long time of Part II., but I was told that it was in the hands of the Deputy Keeper.”

In the summer of 1877 Mr. E. Maunde Thompson writes—

“I have to thank you for your information on the supposed Irish fragment. I sincerely congratulate you on your reappointment.”

Rev. S. W. Kershaw writes from the Library, Lambeth Palace—

“I thank you very much for the pamphlets on the Irish Records. I think his Grace would like a copy. I fear I shall very rarely come to Ireland. We shall be very glad to see you here.”

Dr. Moran, Bishop of Ossory, writes—

“I hope you will not delay long the first volume of ‘The Aphorismical Discovery.’ But you must take care not to work too hard. We cannot afford to lose you. I heard some time ago that you had discovered some journal, or other fragments, of my venerable predecessor, David Rothe. How happy I would be to secure them for our Diocesan Museum, which we have recently established here.”

From Mr. E. P. Shirley, of Lough Fea, is the following :—

“This James Shirley was not the famous Dramatist of whom, by the way, I have an original portrait. Neither of these James Shirleys belonged to my family, as far as is known. The Dramatist belonged to a London family. I have given his pedigree in the last edition of ‘The Stemmata Shirleiana.’ The Irish James Shirley was far away. I have a conjectural descent of this family. If I am right, one of them was a steward to my great-grandfather, and had a

pension of £40, per annum up to his death in 1777. I cannot find the little treatise of Lord Delvin made for Queen Elizabeth on the Irish language, because it is locked up at Lough Fea. I shall be going there in July or August, and if you could come and see me there, you can judge what should be said in your Report on Historical Manuscripts on the original."

Mr. A. Fitzgibbon, from the Rookery, Great Stanmore, writes—

"I am delighted to have confirmed by yourself that which Mr. Hans C. Hamilton had told me, viz. that your health is quite restored, and, in fact, that Richard is himself again. I am rejoiced to learn that you have resumed your literary labours . . . and hope you may long be spared 'to do the State some service.' I should very much like to get a copy of the Geraldine document in Louvain, anent Edmundus Geraldini, to which you refer; but how is it to be got at? Graves is now at work at 'Notes to the Account by Friar Russell, of the White Knights.'"

Laurence Waldron, M.P., writes from Paris—

"I paid another visit to the Mazarin Library, where the manuscript is, about which I wrote to you, and followed your directions. There can be no doubt whatever of its being the work of Lynch, for under the heading of 'Archidiaconi Guamensis,' I find 'Joannes Linchæus hujus libri scriptor.' . . . The conclusion to which I have come is, that Lynch wrote this work on loose sheets and scraps of paper, which were afterwards bound together. . . . From the commencement to the end are frequent alterations, additions, and corrections, in writing which I assume to be Lynch's, the references to the page and line being in the same hand. Several sheets, pages, and slips, bound in, pasted in, and loose, and numerous additions in the margin, in the same writing, force me to the conclusion that no one but the author himself could or would take such liberties with the work. I look on this, in fact, as Lynch's own copy. This I submit to you with the utmost diffidence, for I cannot pretend to

anything but a wish to be informed on these matters. It would be curious to see if the Oxford copy were made before or after the additions."

*From the Marchioness of Ormonde.*

"21, Park Lane, London, July 13, 1877.

"MY DEAR MR. GILBERT,

"I am indeed glad to hear that you are again installed in your office, and delighted to feel that the Ormonde documents will be completely in your care, and that the binding, etc., will be under your auspices.

"My son had already started in his yacht for Ireland when the enclosure which you sent arrived; but I, too, am going to Kilkenny for a few days next week, and I will then deliver them into his hands, and beg of him to lose no time in signing and sending you back the document.

"I am, yours very truly,

"FRS. J. ORMONDE."

There was indeed a general feeling of satisfaction among his friends and in the public mind, not only that Gilbert had been restored to perfect health, but that the treatment to which he had been subjected had in no measure damped his ardour, or lowered his ideal of the work which he was ready to take up again with characteristic energy. Yet at this crisis obstacles were placed in his way by a few who had been over hasty in assuming that his breakdown in health was to result in the premature close of a career which, though it opened so early, was still almost in its first stage. In the Record Office, Dublin, an effort was made to carry on and hold the work of the Facsimiles of the National Manuscripts of Ireland during Gilbert's absence through illness, the consequences of such an attempt being found in mistakes occasioning trouble and inconvenience, as well as unnecessary expense, when the work was restored to the original editorship.



On May 31, 1877, Gilbert, to whom the official letter of authorization was already on its way, wrote to Dr. Ferguson, Deputy Keeper of the Public Record Office, Dublin, courteously expressing his readiness to resume the editorship of the Facsimiles of the National Manuscripts interrupted by his illness.

Dr. Ferguson, in replying, stated—

“The transfer will, however, have to be officially conducted, as it involves communication with the Treasury. In any application you may make you are at liberty to state that I am quite prepared to hand over the undertaking, but you must bear in mind what I formerly impressed on you, that work of that nature entrusted to any one not an officer of the Establishment ought, in my judgment, to be transacted externally.”

On June 30, 1877, Dr. Ferguson wrote further—

“I received last night your letter of the 25th desiring that I should send you authority to take up the Historical Manuscripts Commission documents at the Record Office. They are in the custody of Mr. M’Ghee, as officer of the Commission, and, of course, are not included in my directions to hand over the material of the Facsimiles. In any arrangements that may be made for Mr. M’Ghee’s retirement in your favour, if he should be so disposed, it will be borne in mind that *I entertain an objection to any one not on the Establishment having exceptional privileges at the Record Office*, and that an independent custody in that event will probably have to be made.”

The following letters sufficiently indicate the happy conclusion of this unpleasant episode :—

*From the Master of the Rolls in Ireland.*

“Dublin, June 2, 1877.

“MY DEAR GILBERT,

“I have received your letter with enclosures, and have just directed my Secretary to write the necessary letter to the Lords of the Treasury asking their sanction to the

retransfer of the editing of the National Manuscripts to you. I have had very great pleasure indeed in recommending that this should be done.

“Yours, my dear Gilbert,

“Most sincerely,

“EDWARD SULLIVAN.”

*From the Same.*

“June 11, 1877.

“MY DEAR GILBERT,

“I am most happy to inform you that I have just received a letter from the Treasury authorizing the retransfer of the work of editing the National Manuscripts. Take care not to overwork yourself too much at first.

“Yours most sincerely,

“EDWARD SULLIVAN.”

*From John P. Prendergast, Author of “The Cromwellian Settlement in Ireland.”*

“[1877.]

“On my return from England this morning your well-known handwriting greeted me and gratified me by announcing your good health, which is welcome news to your many friends. Before I dressed myself I read your most instructive memoir of the National Manuscripts of Ireland, and thank you for it most heartily, as it gives us in an accessible form what is not so readily handled when forming part of a ‘blue book.’ I have been relieved somewhat in my anxieties for Dr. Russell by yesterday’s account in the *Freeman*. I heard of his fall in Bath, and suffered great anxiety. He probably has already sent you our last Preface, but lest he may not, I send it now.

“I think you will find the treaty between Ormonde and Owen Roe O’Neill on the enclosed slip. H. J. Shuffrey, Esq., Bodleian Library, Oxford, will copy for you. I have collected what I could from amongst my extracts and copies

relating to Owen Roe O'Neill. I am sorry I have not more. You guessed right about the Declaration of Owen O'Neill and the Ulster Commanders referred to in the note in the account of the Carte Papers. It *is* the Declaration translated into Latin in the 'Hibernia Dominicana.' In the copy in the Carte Papers the names of the subscribers are omitted. I do not know where Lodge got the Remonstrance of the Northern Catholics.

"I wish you every success in the valuable undertaking<sup>1</sup> you have now in hand, and shall await its appearance with the greatest interest."

*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

"May, 1877.

"I am very thankful for the valuable pamphlet which you have sent me. I would with pleasure go to you for dinner on Thursday but that I am bound to return to Tynan on that day. I must fly homeward, my household and poor little orphan grandchildren being in the state of the infants in the Wood of Fochlut, who cried out for the presence of St. Patrick."

*From William Chappell.*

"Stratford Lodge, Oatlands Park, Weybridge Station,

"May 22, 1877.

"My stay in Ireland was unexpectedly prolonged, and I reached home only last Monday, so that I did not receive the two valuable works you were so kind as to send me. I accept them thankfully, and I venture to guess that no one will appreciate them more highly than I. All that I know of the Red Book of Ossory is from an article written by Mr. Graves some time ago in *Notes and Queries*. When I wrote to him he had left the country. It appears from his article that Bishop de Ledwede wrote hymns to popular secular tunes, so that the people might 'sing psalms to hornpipes.' I am anxious to know all the names of the tunes given by Ledwede

<sup>1</sup> "Contemporary History of Affairs in Ireland, 1641-1652."

in the hope of tracing them, and, if not, of mentioning them in a new edition of 'Popular Music of the Olden Time,' or in my 'History of Music.' As an historian, I am anxious to know anything that may illustrate the music of Ireland, Scotland, or England, and shall be thankful for any extract or indication of a new source of information upon the subject. Like you, I work from original sources where they are attainable, and quote the exact authority from which I derive information of any kind, or from anybody. Such books do not pay for the time they occupy, but it is the search for new information which is my pleasure, and I am only tempted to write when I can correct unfounded stories for the benefit of future historians. I am happily enabled to print without caring for remuneration for time and labour, because I have a moderate income earned in my younger days. I pursue the subject for the love I bear to it, and old age without occupation must, I think, be a miserable life. Pray pardon these egotistical details; they are to account for my writing at all. Allow me to ask if you take interest in any branch of music, national music or other? I shall soon reprint two of my works, the 'History' (vol. 1) and 'Popular Music,' as there are no sheets in stock. But the 'Old English Ditties' are stereotyped. Vol. 1 of my 'History' is in the library of the Royal Irish Academy."

*From Lord Talbot de Malahide.*

"14, Albemarle Street, London,

"June 16, 1878.

"MY DEAR GILBERT,

"I have only just returned from abroad. I am delighted to hear that you have resumed the position you so worthily filled at the Royal Irish Academy.

"The discovery of the Oxford Missal is a very interesting one. I shall be in England for some time, but hope to be at Malahide during the meeting of the British Association.

"Believe me, yours truly,

"TALBOT DE MALAHIDE."

About this time Gilbert became very anxious for the publication in the Master of the Rolls' Series, "Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland," of the Chartularies and Annals of the two great abbeys of Dublin—St. Mary's Abbey and the Abbey of St. Thomas—which were the repositories of much documentary treasure valuable to the history of Ireland in its relations with England; and to his expressed desire on the subject he received the following reply from the Deputy Keeper of the Public Record Office, London:—

*From Sir Thomas Duffus Hardy.*

"London, November, 1877.

"DEAR GILBERT,

"Your proposition to edit the Chartulary and Annals of St. Mary's Abbey, Dublin, shall be taken into consideration, with other proposed works, towards the end of the present financial year. Although there is at present no chronicle or memorial on the list for Ireland this year yet, there are several calendars of documents relating to Ireland now being published.

"Yours faithfully,

"T. DUFFUS HARDY."

## CHAPTER XII

1878-1879

The Todd Memorial—The Cunningham Fund—"Leabhar na h-Uidhri"  
—"Leabhar Breac"—"Book of Leinster"—Letters.

AS early as the year 1869 Gilbert had published the following letter in the Dublin newspapers with reference to the Todd Memorial:—

"Villa Nova, Blackrock, October 22, 1869.

"GENTLEMEN,

"I have received your circular respecting a memorial for the late Rev. J. H. Todd, with whom, till his lamented death, I was associated as joint honorary secretary of the Irish Archæological and Celtic Society, for the publication of the materials for Irish history, especially those in the Irish language. Great as were Dr. Todd's collegiate and social merits, I believe that his highest and principal public distinction, and that by which he will be chiefly remembered, was the service which he rendered in the promotion of a sound and accurate school of study of the ancient language of Ireland. This formed a principal feature of his public career, and it was mainly through his labours in connection with native Irish literature that he was known to the world of letters and to the majority of his countrymen. The importance of an accurate and critical investigation of the ancient literary remains in the language of Ireland was frequently brought before the public by Dr. Todd, and was especially dwelt upon in his inaugural address as President of the Royal Irish Academy in 1856. On that occasion he

expressed his admiration for the constitution of the Academy, which he characterized as an institution invaluable in a country circumstanced as Ireland is. 'This Academy,' he added, 'holds out at once rewards and distinctions to the investigator of truth, the most grateful to literary men, and, at the same time, affords a common ground on which all can meet as brethren associated in the common pursuit of knowledge.' Conversant as I am with his views on these subjects, and aware that they are shared by many in Ireland and elsewhere, it appears to me that the most appropriate and permanent monument to his memory would be the foundation of a Professorship of the Irish language in the Royal Irish Academy. On this neutral academic ground and for such an object, various elements might be successfully combined to establish what has been so long wanting—a reliable standard, and scientific authority on the Irish language. Such a professorship, aided by accessories derivable from the Academy's unique collections, would form an active centre through which, with the collaboration available, the authentic and scientific elucidation of the ancient literary monuments of Ireland could be well ensured. We might then with confidence look forward to an early production of the Irish Dictionary, which Dr. Todd, in his above-quoted address, declared it was his ambition to see carried out as a national object, and given to the world as the Dictionary of the Academy of Ireland.

"I have the honour to be, gentlemen,

"Your obedient servant,

"(Signed) J. T. GILBERT.

"To the Honorary Secretaries of the Todd Memorial."

In 1870 it was found that the subscriptions to the Todd Memorial Fund, of which Gilbert and Hardinge were the treasurers, did not amount to a sufficient sum for the founding of a Professorship of the Celtic language, and in consequence Gilbert proposed to devote the money to an equally Irish and national object—the production in facsimile of the

“Book of Lecan.” This proposal, however, was not accepted by the Academy; and somewhat later the memorial fund was sufficiently augmented to permit the fulfilment of the first intention of the promoters of the movement, with the result that the now existing Todd Professorship was founded in connection with the Royal Irish Academy.

During the same year (1878) it was proposed by certain members of the Academy to divert the “Cunningham Fund,” entrusted by bequest to that institution, from the channel of usefulness intended by the donor, and an urgent protest was made by other members against the scheme.<sup>1</sup>

Gilbert was active in supporting the protest, as was W. H. Hardinge, his co-trustee of the Cunningham Fund, who writes to him in June, 1878, complaining of “the application in the Rolls Court by two irresponsible members of the Academy (not having the sanction of an Academy General Meeting called for the special purpose) to divert the interest of the Cunningham Fund bequest from the testator’s appropriation of it, ‘for the encouragement of learning in Ireland,’ to the ‘illustration of papers.’ How illustrating, and what, and whose papers? The Master of the Rolls should not entertain the application without the Academy authority to the petitioners above suggested.”

*From Dr. W. K. Sullivan.*

“Cork, January 25, 1878.

“I send you the protest, signed. It looks uncommonly Papistical. Could you not get a few decent Protestants, in addition, on it?”

*From D. F. MacCarthy.*

“London, July, 1878.

“I am very much obliged to you for sending me the numbers of the *Freeman’s Journal* containing the decision of the Master of the Rolls on the scheme for distributing the

See Appendix.



Cunningham Fund, and the comments of the papers thereon. I find that nothing could be more admirable than the remarks and reasoning of the Master of the Rolls, and some of his illustrations are very amusing. That one about printing the Vice-Chancellor's prize poems is capital. The Press here seems to have adopted his views, as one of the comic papers of yesterday, in referring to the proposed scheme, speaks of it as the Cuning-sham scheme. The mistake of one of the learned counsel in supposing that Dr. Reeves' 'Life of St. Columba' was published in the *Transactions* of the Royal Irish Academy is rather amusing. Considering the size of the volume, counsel can scarcely escape under cover of the well-known legal axiom, *De minimis non curat Lex*. The glorious uncertainty of the law was never more curiously exemplified. A new 'Life of St. Patrick,' by the Rev. W. B. Morris, of the Oratory, is about appearing. He has kindly asked me to accept a copy. His previous works give good promise of a valuable book. The 'Life of St. Patrick' from an English Oratorian's point of view will be interesting."

*From Dr. R. R. Madden.*

"Tinode, near Blessington, Monday.

"MY DEAR GILBERT,

"Pray be assured my only feeling about the reading of the paper is that it was very kind of you to undertake it, and that the importance of the discussion that was to follow my paper was quite sufficient to justify the shortening of the latter. I suppose I am mainly indebted to you and my old friend O'Curry for the decision of the Committee of Publication, which is gratifying to me, for I have a very strong conviction on my mind that I shall not again have a similar favour to seek or to obtain. I most earnestly hope that you will be successful in your efforts to defeat the object of the party in the Academy (the Trinity College party, and the unnatural supporters in the Academy not of their clique) who hate antiquarian pursuits, or hold

those who pursue them in contempt. I can very well understand the indifference of that party towards all objects which have in view the promotion of the interests of antiquarianism. And I can make some allowance for the prejudices against antiquarian researches of men whose time and talents are mainly devoted to mathematical studies and attainments, or to learning exclusively devoted to other professional pursuits. But I cannot understand those who have scarcely any connection with either, for any purpose of expediency even, identifying themselves with such a party. Depend upon it, the course taken by you and Dr. Reeves is the only one worthy of you, and calculated to enhance your merits in the opinion of all right-minded persons who are truly interested in the true interests, and the legitimate purpose, and the original aim and end of the Royal Irish Academy.

“Yours, dear Gilbert,

“Very faithfully and sincerely,

“R. R. MADDEN.”

*From D. F. MacCarthy.*

“Hotel Saint Romain, Rue du Dauphin, Paris,

“January 26, 1878.

“I took a long walk to-day to Sèvres to see the Musée Céramique, and afterwards through the part of St. Cloud as far as the chateau so patriotically destroyed by the French in the Prussian siege. The day has been so unusually bright and fine, and I felt so well, that I scorned *voiture, diligence, or chemin de fer*, and gallantly walked back to Paris again. It is thus that I have just received Florence’s letter of yesterday sending me yours of the 24th, enclosing the Cunningham Fund matter. Knowing as you do how thoroughly I agree with you and the other Protest-ants in the matter, I trust you have appended my name without hearing from me, which, under the circumstances, was impossible. I send you, however, the paper, signed, though it will scarcely be in time for your purpose, as the mails do not go out on Sunday. Up to

yesterday the weather has been exceedingly cold and disagreeable, rain, sleet, snow, and hail alternating. To-day, however, has been delightful, and if it would always continue so, and ‘if I were an unconnected man,’ as Shelley says in ‘Julian and Maddalo,’ like him I might be tempted to form a plan ‘never to leave’ Paris. I may be here some days yet, so that if there is any book or other matter you would like me hunt up for you, I should be most happy to do it. I am here on *Cosas de España*, in one of those fine chateaux in that airy region which I am not yet tired of constructing. I am greatly pleased with this duodecimo Delphin edition of a hotel. Tennyson’s, mine, and other great people’s names are in the visitors’ book. I dare say at the end, when they ‘send bill,’ I may have to change my mind—and many Napoleons.”

The effort made by the protest resulted in a satisfactory decision of the Master of the Rolls in Ireland, which will be found in the Appendix.

An epoch in the history of ancient Irish writings was reached when a department for work on Irish manuscripts was first established in the Royal Irish Academy in 1866, on the suggestion of John T. Gilbert, Librarian of the Academy, and placed under his direction by the Committee of Irish Manuscripts of the Council. In 1869 the Council stated that, at the proposal of Mr. Gilbert, they had commenced the publication of the ancient Irish texts in their integrity, “which,” they said, “it is hoped will be attended with important results in the promotion of Celtic studies.” Following this, and on a system originated by Gilbert, the two important manuscripts, “*Leabhar na h-Uidhri*” and “*Leabhar Breac*,” were edited by him, and published under his direction and supervision. The editing and publication of the “*Book of Leinster*” was then proposed and undertaken by Gilbert, who carried on the work, until a temporary failure of health obliged him, reluctantly, to pause in his many labours, and seek change of air and scene. On returning to take up his

position as Librarian of the Academy, which had been filled in his absence by another, he found that the editing of the "Book of Leinster" had been transferred to hands which were now resolved to hold it. Seeing that as early as 1866 he had inaugurated the movement thus to render the ancient texts accessible to students in all parts of the world, and had already edited the "Leabhar na h-Uidhri" and "Leabhar Breac," and had accomplished a considerable part of the editing of the "Book of Leinster," he naturally desired to continue and complete the last-mentioned volume. After a determined struggle to retain the editorship of this work which he had so much at heart, he was obliged to see the results of the time and labour disinterestedly bestowed by him upon it entirely appropriated by another.

It will be observed that in the introduction to the "Book of Leinster" no mention is made of Gilbert, who, as first editor, had arranged the entire manuscript for transcription and publication, and under whose supervision a considerable portion of the work had been printed. The report and notes of his struggle to retain the editorship of the "Book of Leinster" are given in the Appendix.

*From the Right Rev. Dr. Graves.*

"The Palace, Limerick, March 25, 1878.

"MY DEAR MR. GILBERT,

"Many thanks for the copy of the *Academy*. The Missal which you describe is a very interesting one. I should like to see the Litany contained in it. In fact, I wish I had a list of all the known Ancient Irish litanies. I dare say Reeves would help me in making this out, and you would kindly remember my need of it. I will write to Lord Gort, making use of the hint you give me. I cannot remember exactly on what occasion I expressed my opinion as to the value of the ancient Irish Manuscript pedigrees. I think it was in a paper on an Ogham inscription, read before the R.I.A.;

and, if so, there may be no record of it in the *Proceedings*, for I made the abstracts of my papers very brief. However, I can easily put you in possession of the testimony which you wish to elicit. I am preparing a paper for the R.I.A. on an Ogham inscription, the age of which I am enabled to fix by means of two ancient pedigrees. This will give me an excellent occasion to say something on the general subject. How soon would you want this?

"The Bodleian Manuscript, described by Dr. Todd in the *Proceedings of the R.I.A.*, vol. ii., p. 336, contains a tract which I suspect would be of great value to me in my Ogham researches. It is a very ancient tract on the genealogies of the race of Ir. Even if the substance of the pedigrees was the same as what McFirbis gives, the spelling of the names might be of great importance in my inquiries. I suppose I shall have to go to Oxford to examine it.

"Ever yours faithfully,

"C. LIMERICK.

"I was, indeed, glad to see that you had been reappointed Librarian."

Three days later Dr. Graves wrote—

"The enclosed letter from Lord Gort shows that he is not likely to give us access to any of his manuscripts. The fact that they have been already looked at and handled does not prove that they ought not to be examined by a competent person."

In Lord Gort's reply to the Bishop of Limerick he states—

"I have full confidence in your knowledge and judgment in such matters, and would be guided by your advice if I had manuscripts to be examined. I have a few letters and accounts, curious as showing the prices in Ireland a century and a half ago. They have been examined by Mr. Lenihan, when writing his 'History.' But they are few in number."

*From J. T. Gilbert to Right Rev. Dr. Graves.*

“Villa Nova, Blackrock,

“March 30, 1878.

“DEAR BISHOP,

“It is to be regretted that Lord Gort’s letter is not more promising. The ‘History’ to which he alludes is far from being up to the mark. The Irish Manuscript in the Bodleian, described by Dr. Todd, was examined by me, and I had facsimiles of some of its pages for the third part of the work on the National Manuscripts. I doubt, however, that you would consider it superior as a text to our ‘Book of Lecan,’ which contains six of the genealogies of the tribe of Ir in Lecan and Ballimote, which, perhaps, might be as useful for your work as the Oxford Manuscript. I am delighted to hear of your intended paper for the Academy, and will be most happy if I can supply any materials from our manuscripts for it. The remarks on the genealogies could be cited very well in the third part of the ‘National Manuscripts,’ which will not be finished for at least six months or longer.

“Yours faithfully,

“J. T. GILBERT.”

*From Mrs. Burrell.*

“11, Merrion Square East, Dublin, April 14, 1878.

“DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“I think you will be pleased to hear that my husband has seen the Drummond Missal. It is safe at Grimsthorpe, in Lincolnshire. Lady Willoughby was greatly interested in your notice of it in the *Academy* which you kindly sent us; but she is very anxious for information about it, particularly to know if there is a facsimile printed, if anything, in fact, is *being done*. It was really very fortunate your sending us that *Academy*. It is a good thing to draw

Lady Willoughby's attention to the Missal, as it is thus more likely to be taken care of. Willoughby asks me a whole string of questions, but if you would just tell me anything about it, at what date you think it was written, etc., it would be most kind of you, and we should be greatly obliged. I think you said you had not seen it yourself. With many apologies for troubling you,

“Believe me, yours sincerely,

“MARY BURRELL.”

Dr. Gardiner, who was engaged on the period of his history of England which is concerned with the seventeenth-century “Wars in Ireland,” looked for all his information on that subject to Gilbert, as to the very highest and most reliable authority.

*From Dr. S. R. Gardiner.*

“4, Gordon Street, London,

“September, 20, 1878.

“I am very much obliged to you for so promptly reporting on the manuscripts.

“Could you give me an idea how much is worth anything? If you have material for about thirty or forty pages relating to Ware, that might be made the substantive portion of the publication, and whatever is worth having in the present manuscript might be worked in. At all events, I should be glad to leave the matter in your hands. We meet on Wednesday week, and I could lay anything you could tell me further before the Council.

“Can you help me to the real reason of the change of feeling between the first two sessions of the Irish Parliament of 1640? Was it merely Strafford's absence, or was it the course of events in England, or intercourse with the constituencies, which turned the members round?”

*From D. F. MacCarthy.*

“London, 1878.

“I am sorry to say that Longman’s last bulletin in reference to the ‘Facsimiles of the National Manuscripts’ gives little hope of my being able to obtain a copy of Part I. Here it is, or rather, here it isn’t. ‘National Manuscripts of Ireland,’ vol. i. Extract of reply from H.M. Stationery Office, November 28—

“‘We have very few copies remaining, and the question of reprinting is under consideration, and until it is decided we shall retain our copies.’

“I shall, however, try Quaritch.”

*From the Duke of Leinster.*

“Kilkea Castle, Mageny, October 1, 1878.

“DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“The book may be sent to my house in Dominick Street. I have no doubt it will be as splendid a work as the last part. I trust you will get subscribers to the archæological volumes, and shall be glad if you will place my name and that of Lord Kildare on the list. I am delighted to hear so good an account of Dr. Russell.

“Believe me, yours very faithfully,

“LEINSTER.”

*From Right Rev. Dr. Graves.*

“The Palace, Henry Street, Limerick,

“March 22, 1878.

“MY DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“I send you a Roll which you will be kind enough to examine. You will be able easily enough to determine whether it deserves notice in the Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission. When it was given to me some



years ago I took the pains to copy it—at least, I commenced the work and laid it aside unfinished, not feeling quite sure whether it was worth my while to devote to the task as much time as would be necessary in deciphering parts of the writing which are very indistinct. I copied all the names of the Mayors and Bailiffs, and found them, as well as I remember, to agree with the lists given in the published histories of Limerick.

“By the way, what an extraordinarily inaccurate and unscholarlike book Lenihan’s ‘History of Limerick’ is! I suspect he might have done more and better with the materials of which he had the use. I have never heard whether Lord Gort intends to give us access to his manuscript stores. I have a personal interest in this question, for I suspect that the examination of them would lead to the discovery of facts bearing on the history of my family. My grandfather’s grandfather, John Graves, was one of the Sheriffs of Limerick in 1709.

“Believe me to be,

“Yours very sincerely,

“LIMERICK.”

*From Oscar Wilde.*

“1, Merrion Square, Dublin, Sunday.

“DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“In the *Saunders* of yesterday you will find a short article by me on the unfortunate author of the ‘Irish Crosses.’ I have put forward your point about the Cunningham Bequest as strongly as I could without being rude. I have just suggested it. I hope that the Academy will do something for this very learned and clever artist.

“Pray offer Miss Gilbert my best wishes for the New Year, and accept them yourself, from

“Yours very truly,

“OSCAR WILDE.”

*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

“The Rectory, Tynan, March 25, 1878.

“MY DEAR GILBERT,

“I am heartily glad that you are back in your old place in the Academy, and I hope you will long be there to aid and adorn it. The account of the Missal is in many ways gratifying as well as instructive. I am glad to learn from it that you intend to give us a good share of illustrations from that manuscript, and further that there is a prospect of our seeing the Drummond Missal, even though its editor has been removed by death.

“Yours faithfully,

“WM. REEVES.”

In 1878 MacCarthy writes to Mary Gilbert—

“I wish I could comply with your request, but I fear ‘the days of story and song’ are over for me. I am glad, however, that you still have a remembrance of the ‘Shamrock from the Irish Shore.’ I am rejoiced to hear of J. T.’s activity and happiness. He ought to accept Madame Livio’s invitation before the Paris Exhibition closes.”

In another letter from London, he says—

“The contrast between the gloom and glare of a public funeral at this hyper-equatorial season and the opening of your dainty box of delicious flowers from Villa Nova was delightful; and though I have scarcely a moment to say it, I must tell you how much I thank you, and how truly welcome are these sweet memorials of your home and of yourself. I wish I could send you in return even such imperfect verses as those you so kindly accepted from me when at Boulogne. To do that, however, I should, like Arion, assume my singing robes, which in the present state of the thermometer, when one would be disposed to follow the cool advice of Sydney Smith, would be a rash experiment. The funeral to which I allude was that of Charles Mathews, which Florence and I, after mass in St. Mary of the Angels, duly

attended. There was a very large crowd, including many notables, among whom decidedly the most remarkable looking was Henry Irving. He stood at the foot of the grave, and, from the expression of his face, seemed to meditate leaping into it, if there were only a Laertes to contend with. Nothing, however, more tragic than beautiful garlands and wreaths of flowers was laid upon the light and small coffin, which looked like that of a woman. I am glad to hear such good news of Sister Stanislaus."

In 1879 the centenary of Thomas Moore was celebrated in Dublin, and an ode by D. F. MacCarthy was recited on the occasion by the well-known Rev. Dr. Tisdall.

MacCarthy wrote in May—

"You must ask J. T. to forgive me for not having at once answered his friendly inquiry, all the more that even now I cannot 'name the day, the happy, happy day,' when I shall turn up at Villa Nova. I feel very much indisposed to go to Dublin at all until this Moore-ish centenary business is happily well (or ill) over. The committee, I fear, is not a very united family. . . . I feel a natural repugnance to stand in the pillory of my own condemnation when my ode is pretty sure to receive its deserved quietus on the 28th inst. Sir Robert Stewart will not be able to set it to music, as there is not time, but he writes to me in too laudatory terms of the verses. I have great fears, but with Tisdall's fine elocution it may pass. I shouldn't be at the ordeal of the recitation for any consideration."

In another letter MacCarthy writes—

"With regard to the ode, I am put under a sort of vow by Dr. Tisdall not to send even a single copy to Ireland before, as he says, it 'comes living and breathing' from his lips. He thinks more highly of it than it deserves, and wishes that it should burst with absolute novelty and freshness for the first time on the ears of his audience. It is not the first time a man broke his vow for the sake of a lady, as I do now in your behalf. Although the offering has the taint of perjury about it, I trust that you will graciously

accept it and condone the offence. A stronger reason for keeping it out of your view is a well-grounded fear that it would not come up to the moderate expectations you may have formed. I trust, on the whole, that you and J. T. will think the poem fairly done. Tisdall objects only to one line, and that, I think, on political rather than poetical grounds."

Again he writes—

"If I had not been quite convalescent, your kind letter must have worked a miracle on the instant. It is a part of the great debt which, I fear, I shall never be able to discharge. I am delighted that J. T. is coming over. He should remember that the Academy and Grosvenor Galleries close at the end of this month. Florence and I went to the Academy, but were not greatly struck by any of the pictures. Millais seems to have taken a new departure, his portraits look as if the colours were laid on with a trowel. Mrs. Butler's pictures attract great attention. J. T.'s room will be ready for him whenever he arrives. Thank him for letters and for the *Academy*. I was glad to see an allusion to him in Saturday's *Academy* in reference to the Oxford Irish Missal."

For all his modesty, however, MacCarthy was obliged to submit to the public presentation of a wreath of laurels in recognition of his ode on the poet Thomas Moore. After this event, the laureate and his friend "J. T. G.," returning to spend the evening at Villa Nova, called at Sion Hill Convent, Blackrock, to display the wreath for the amusement of Sister Mary Stanislaus, the poet's daughter; and the good Dominican "sisters" and "mothers" still relate how Gilbert placed the wreath on MacCarthy's head, and how the two serious scholars, linked arm in arm and with peals of laughter, danced about like schoolboys in the convent parlour.

Writing to Gilbert from London in June of that year, MacCarthy says—

"Thanks for your rescuing my letter from—

'Amid the wise old serpents coiled around  
The Tree of Knowledge in academies.'

They would have been too wise to have invested the sixpence postage you rashly advanced on my account. Was ever poet so trusted before? The mystical letters M.R.I.A. do not seem very familiar to the post-office authorities. The letter is a long and interesting one, which I should have been sorry to have missed, containing a St. Louis paper with full account of the Centennial celebration in that city, almost at the same moment when our friend Dr. Tisdall was delighting the ears of his great Dublin audience in the Exhibition Buildings. In this paper the ode is printed in full. I have had some long and interesting letters from America, including one from Mrs. Ticknor, the widow of George Ticknor. You will be glad to hear that the elaborate catalogue of Spanish books bequeathed to the Public Library of Boston will be published by Mrs. Ticknor. I shall have much pleasure in searching for 'Guicciardini's Aphorisms,' which, I am glad to hear, is not very rare, as I should like to send it to you."

Later the poet writes to Mary Gilbert—

"Has Sister Stanislaus shown you the copy of Lord Beaconsfield's letter about the Moore ode, the author, and Moore himself?"

## CHAPTER XIII

1877-1878

Work resumed under Historical Manuscripts Commission—Royal Irish Academy—Ormonde Manuscripts—Kilkenny Castle—Extracts from Diary of Denis Florence MacCarthy—Letters.

THE manner in which he was welcomed back to his position as Inspector and Editor for Ireland under the Historical Manuscripts Commission is indicated by the following letters:—

*From John Romilly to Lord Talbot de Malahide.*

“Rolls House, [London],

“June 11, 1877.

“MY LORD,

“In reply to your letter addressed to the Master of the Rolls, I am desired to request that you will kindly state the subject-matter of the question to be brought before the Commissioners, so that it may be placed upon the Agenda. I may add, however, that if the question be of the re-employment of Mr. Gilbert as Inspector under the Commission, the Master of the Rolls is fully empowered, as acting Commissioner, to sanction such engagement, and that upon receiving from Mr. Gilbert an application specifying one or two private collections of manuscripts open to his immediate inspection, his Lordship will have pleasure in making the necessary arrangements with the Treasury at a very early date.

“I remain, my Lord,

“Your obedient servant,

“JOHN ROMILLY.

“To the Right Honourable Lord Talbot de Malahide.”

*From J. T. Gilbert to J. J. Cartwright.*

“Villa Nova, Blackrock, Dublin,  
“May 30, 1877.

“DEAR MR. CARTWRIGHT,

“Many thanks for your letter of yesterday. I am satisfied that the Commission took the best course they could.

“The extract from the Report in reference to me is unavoidably *funereal* in its tone; perhaps authority might be given to admit of a slip notifying that I am about to resume my work for the Commission. To insure accuracy, I would suggest the following emendation:—

“Line 10 of extract from proof: for ‘final report upon the Ormonde papers’ read ‘final report upon portion of the Ormonde letters and papers.’ The letters and papers referred to are but a part of the Ormonde collection. There is a considerable quantity which I inspected at Kilkenny Castle to be subsequently done. There are also numerous documents, such as charters, rolls, manuscript books, and miscellanea which are of the highest importance, all of which I have arranged subsequently to undertake. The passage as it now stands in the proof, might lead people to believe that the Report on the papers in hand would conclude the *whole* collection, which would not be correct.

“I enclose a memorandum of this collection for Sir Thomas Hardy, of collections of manuscripts in Ireland to which I am able to obtain access. I would wish you to tell him that I have made a very important discovery, which I would like should first come to light through the Commission, as an evidence of the value of its labours. I have found the long missing book supposed to have been lost, entitled ‘The History of the Late War in Ireland,’ written by Sir Richard Bellings, Secretary to the Irish Confederate Catholics in the reign of Charles I. He acted as their confidential agent to Queen Henrietta Maria and Louis XIV., was their accredited ambassador to the Pope, and accompanied the Papal Legate, Rinuccini, to Ireland. His manuscript is

most valuable, as showing the views of the majority of Irish Roman Catholics towards England.

“I can also report a manuscript of the most interesting character of the same period, by a most learned and witty author, describing from another point of view the affairs of Ireland, 1641–50, and those who figured in them, with personal sketches and anecdotes of the most curious kind.

“In fact, there is a much larger field in Ireland than I could have possibly worked for the Commission under the old limit of thirty days annually, which was imposed because I held office in the Record Department, from which I am now free.

“Yours faithfully,

“J. T. GILBERT.”

Enclosed in this letter is a “Memorandum of collections of Manuscripts in Ireland, not yet examined, to which Mr. John T. Gilbert can obtain access. Manuscripts belonging to—

“The Duke of Leinster.

“The Duke of Abercorn.

“The Duke of Devonshire.

“The Primate of All Ireland.

“The Archbishop of Dublin.

“The Marquis of Ormonde : further collection.

“The Marquis of Drogheda.

“The Marquis of Waterford.

“The Earl of Meath.

“The Earl of Fingall.

“The Earl of Roden.

“Lord Emly.

“The Earl of Granard : second collection.

“O’Conor Don, M.P. : second collection.

“Trinity College, Dublin.

“Marsh’s Library, Dublin.

“Royal Irish Academy.

“Manuscripts from St. Isidore’s, Rome.

“Right Hon. More O’Farrell.

“Total 19. All inspected by Mr. Gilbert.”



*From J. T. Gilbert to D. F. MacCarthy.*

“ Villa Nova, Blackrock, Co. Dublin,

“ July 15, 1877.

“ MY DEAR MACCARTHY,

“ Your card reached me on yesterday, and we are hoping to see John on to-day or to-morrow. If I knew his address, I would write and ask him to come and stop for some days here.

“ If he is likely to remain in Dublin for any time, you might write to him on the subject, and tell him how much pleasure it would be for us to have him here. We are much obliged by your interesting letter on the Moore window. We had not seen it before. I mentioned it yesterday to Lady Wilde, and send it to her by this post. Her son Oscar is very anxious to meet you. He dined here with Dr. Madden and W. K. Sullivan on Tuesday last. We were wishing that you, too, had been with us.

“ The Government have reinstated me in the post I held in connection with the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts in a very gratifying manner, at the special instance of Sir G. Jessell, Master of the Rolls in England, Chairman of the Commission. This was done in a very handsome way, although it now appears that every opposition was given to me by the head of the O.V.F.

“ The Marchioness of Ormonde has sent me a most gratifying letter, expressing her own and her son's ‘delight’ at my having been thus reappointed. I had also a very kind letter from her daughter, Lady Mary Butler, whose marriage with Lord Fitzwilliam's son you probably saw an account of some days ago.

“ If you go into any old book shops in France, will you try to find me a copy of the two volumes noted on enclosed slip? I would be glad to get them for a guinea a-piece,

although the copies in T.C.D. were bought for eightpence ! They were printed somewhere in France. My sister sends her best regards.

“ Believe me to be, very sincerely yours,  
“ JOHN T. GILBERT.”

In 1878 he was restored to his position as Honorary Librarian of the Royal Irish Academy. In May of the same year a dear friend met with an accident, resulting in an illness which led to his death. The Rev. Dr. Charles William Russell, President of Maynooth College (uncle of Lord Russell of Killowen, Lord Chief Justice of England), was thrown from his horse, and, having struggled against the effects of the shock for a year or two, died on February 26, 1880.

On May 22 the Duke of Leinster wrote—

“ DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“ I was very glad to receive your letter yesterday, giving so good an account of your health. Many thanks for the ‘ Account of the Irish Manuscripts.’

“ We are much grieved at our friend Dr. Russell’s accident, but are pleased to hear a good bulletin this morning.

“ Yours faithfully,  
“ LEINSTER.”

Rev. Dr. Farrelly wrote from Maynooth—

“ I was delighted to receive your letter yesterday. Thank God you have returned in such excellent health. Poor Dr. Russell has had a very serious accident. I trust the worst is past.”

From Rome writes Mr. W. H. Bliss—

“ I am very glad of your letter ; it is kind of you to have thought of me. I am very anxious indeed about Dr.

Russell. He is a friend such as few men have the happiness of having."

*From Sir T. Duffus Hardy.*

"London, 1878.

"It was with unfeigned sorrow that I read the account you sent me of poor good Dr. Russell's accident. I trust, however, that it will not be too much for him to bear. He is a dear kind fellow, and I highly respect and honour him. I intend to write to him in a day or two. Lady Hardy desires me to send you her best congratulations and kind wishes."

Rev. H. O. Coxe, Librarian of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, wrote—

"Mr. Turner has just brought me your very charming 'Introduction' to the National Manuscripts of Ireland, and tells me what I am delighted to hear, that you are well enough to 'put on your working-day clothes' once again. I trust that plenty of health will be given to you to go on with the work which you have so well begun."

Mr. Turner wrote—

"I must sympathize with you upon being subject to such unkindness by Government. The illustrations selected by you from the various manuscripts of Irish art are most beautiful examples. I fear to that volume, and to the multiplicity of your other engagements, must be ascribed your illness. May I, as a friend, beg of you not to overwork again."

Touching several matters connected with the renewal of Gilbert's work, Dr. W. K. Sullivan wrote—

"I cannot tell you the pleasure which the sight of your well-known handwriting gave me. I congratulate you on being out of the Record Office. I am sure you will be able

to do your literary work with pleasure when you have not to be a mere machine.

“Of the National Manuscripts—the work belongs to you by all the laws of authorship. The first part is truly a national monument. I am right glad you have returned to your office under the Historical Manuscripts Commission. The Master of the Rolls acted as a real friend. I once formed a very high opinion of him when he was Crown Prosecutor in Green Street. He gave me an idea of what the theory of our criminal law suggests should be practised, but what one rarely sees carried out. The opinion then formed has been fully confirmed from the straightforward truthful way in which he acted about you. It is a pleasure to find that, after all, there are perhaps more good than bad men in the world. I know few that seem to have given rise to warmer friendships than yourself.

“I gave Caulfield your message. I need hardly say how glad he was of your complete recovery. He is a happy man now. You should see him in his glory of cap and gown in his official chair. But when he has an old vellum or old calf tome before him he is in his full glory.

“The *Tain Bó Cúailgne* has not progressed as quickly as I could wish, chiefly owing to my being unable to remain in Dublin for a few days, and also to O’Looney being engaged when I was there at the contents of the ‘*Leabhar Breac*’ and other matters. When I go up I will show you how we stand, and about the appearance of the book, etc. I think it will be a good thing in the way of a text and translation.

“You will now be able to bring out your book about 1641, but though I am anxious to see this completed, and you at your old literary occupations, I hope you will not work too soon, or too hard, or stick too much in your ‘den.’ Make, at least for a while, a relaxation of your work, and, in the end, you and it will perhaps be all the better for taking matters easy. I am afraid the railway speed of everything and everybody is not the best. You see I am gradually becoming a Cork man again. Here they are certainly not in a

hurry to do anything. Even I am looked on as too fast a man !”

Early in the year 1877 the Marquis of Ormonde wrote from London to the Government—

“I desire that Mr. J. T. Gilbert, F.S.A., should take charge of my documents now at the Public Record Office, Dublin, and arrange all the further matter in connection with them and their return to Kilkenny Castle.

“ORMONDE.”

About this time Gilbert paid many visits to Kilkenny Castle, examining and putting into thorough order the invaluable muniments there treasured since the days of the Anglo-Irish wars, when the great Duke of Ormonde was Lord Deputy in Ireland. Like many other possessors of such rare ancestral treasure, the Ormonde family had at first hesitated to allow their archives to be examined and made public property, but being assured of the benefit to the world which would result from a sacrifice of this reluctance, the late Dowager Marchioness of Ormonde entered with generous spirit into Gilbert's plans for letting in the sunshine on so much hidden history, and proceeded to give him every possible assistance in a task which was greatly lightened and sweetened by her sympathetic enthusiasm.

He was able to estimate the wealth of the mine thus opened to him, and thoroughly enjoyed his opportunity of working it with power. The romantic and moving associations of the old castle, the genial society of his kind entertainers, as well as the intense interest that centred for him in the ancient muniment room, all affected him, each with its peculiar charm. “I spent many happy days at Kilkenny Castle,” he said, later in life, referring to that particular period of social enjoyment and intellectual activity. The following little group of letters make note of his visits to Kilkenny :—

*From the Dowager Marchioness of Ormonde.*

“Kilkenny Castle, November 30.

“DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“You know you promised that you would come to pay us a visit, and I begged of you to name a time when I should be here. I sincerely hope you will not disappoint us. Arthur is very desirous of being here when you pay us a visit. I could find out from him when he will be here, and then I will let you know, hoping that your plans and his will not clash, and that you will, ere long, give us the pleasure of a visit here. The framed documents, I ascertained, are in the Gallery here. Upon Arthur's return I will get the key of the Evidence Room and look for the seals. I had the satisfaction of cutting open the leaves of your book this day, it having arrived by post this morning. It looks most interesting. I showed it to Mr. Kavanagh, and he intends to purchase a copy. You are really too generous and kind about that magnificent work. You have already been so munificent that I cannot bear to encroach still further, and I assure you that it was my full intention to have tried to get a copy of Part III. Please let me do so this time.

“Yours very sincerely,

“FRS. J. ORMONDE.”

*From J. T. Gilbert to Mary Gilbert.*

“Kilkenny Castle,

“Thursday, January 3, 1877.

“MY DEAR SISTER,

“I wrote you yesterday evening. The Marquess and Marchioness arrived to-day from London in time for lunch. I was introduced by her mother-in-law to the young Marchioness. She is quite as handsome as the photographs, and very agreeable, and most kind. The Marquess expressed great satisfaction at my being here, and is quite pleased with what I have done.

"Lady Blanche has grown up very handsome, and is most agreeable. The day has been wet without ceasing. I have nothing particular to say except to ask you not to send me anything here after the afternoon post on Friday, as I shall leave early on Saturday.

"In haste, yours,  
"J. T. G."

*From the Same to the Same.*

"Kilkenny Castle, January 4, 1878.

"MY DEAR SISTER,

"I sent you a letter to-day, another on yesterday, with an addition made to-day. There is a great hunt at Jenkinstown to-day, to which the Marquess and Marchioness are gone. A large servants' ball will be held here this evening. I have written to D. F. MacC., also to Dr. Russell; and to Dr. Lyons, explaining why I could not accept his invitation. I hope to leave to-morrow at 2.30, and to be at Villa Nova about 7 p.m. I send you a view of the castle, the best I could get, but it is a very poor one.

"In haste, yours ever,  
"J. T. G."

*From the Dowager Marchioness of Ormonde.*

"Elvaston Castle, December 11.

"DEAR MR. GILBERT,

"Your letter has just reached me, forwarded from Park Lane, and not a post shall go out without its bearing my very grateful thanks to you for the *munificent gift* you have been so very good as to tell me that you propose bestowing upon me. I assure you I shall value these volumes more, perhaps, than you can imagine, enhanced to me still further by the kindly and friendly expressions which you so amiably and liberally apply to me.

"With every desire to render any assistance to you, I can but feel that it is only your kindness which has magnified

largely the very little service it was in my power to render to you in the very laborious undertaking which has been carried through so indefatigably by you, and which has been crowned with such complete success. I think that it will please you to know that when I was looking at Ormonde's two volumes of the 'National Manuscripts of Ireland' with great interest, I felt such a desire to be possessed of them that I observed to my sons, 'I wonder if it would be possible for me to get them for myself,' but they seemed to think it would be very difficult; therefore you may judge what unbounded pleasure and satisfaction the announcement contained in your letter of this morning has caused me. The only thing wanting to make the present complete is that you should write my name in the volumes, and I shall look forward to your doing so when you come to London and pay me your promised visit.

"Believe me, dear Mr. Gilbert,

"Yours sincerely,

"FRS. J. ORMONDE."

*From the Same.*

"Kilkenny Castle, January 9.

"DEAR MR. GILBERT,

"I received your letter and enclosures yesterday morning just before leaving Borris. I am extremely obliged to you for your kindness in sending me one of your books, which you judged rightly does interest me very much. I read to Mr. Kavanagh the message, and gave him the copy, as you desired that I would do. He begged that I would express to you how pleased he was to receive the book from you, and to thank you very much for it.

"I showed Ormonde this morning your suggestion with regard to the arrangement of the external covers. He was delighted with it, and will only be too glad to profit by your kind offices. Will you let me have a line saying whether you wish us to fill in the dates of those not already marked on the document you enclosed?



“It gave me real pleasure to see that you have so completely recovered from your indisposition and are strong and well again.

“Believe me, yours very truly,  
“FRS. J. ORMONDE.”

A letter addressed to Dr. Graves, Bishop of Limerick in 1878, refers to the “Book of Lecan,” the contents of which Gilbert had long earnestly desired to make accessible to scholars, and serviceable to the cause of Irish literature.

*From J. T. Gilbert to the Right Rev. Dr. Graves,  
Bishop of Limerick.*

“Royal Irish Academy,  
“19, Dawson Street, Dublin,  
“October 12, 1878.

“DEAR BISHOP,

“The Treasurer has asked me to reply to your inquiry about the pedigrees in the ‘Book of Lecan.’ I regret to say that we have no copies of them or of any similar ones which might be of use to you.

“I mentioned the project of photographing the ‘Book of Lecan’ to some of the Todd Committee, but they did not seem inclined to approve of it. Others, however, would be in favour of a step of the kind. When you are next in Dublin, perhaps I may have an opportunity of speaking to you again on the subject.

“The second part of my work on the ‘Facsimiles of National Manuscripts’ will be published in a few days, and I am now printing the third part, which carry down to 1545.

“The sale of the first part has been so large that the entire edition is reported to be exhausted with the exception of a very few copies.

“Yours very sincerely,  
“J. T. GILBERT.”

*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

“The Rectory, Tynan, November 16, 1878.

“It is exactly a month since you sent me the extract about Phelimy O’Neill, and it is rather a deferred civility to write at this time of day to acknowledge your kindness. However, just at the time I received yours I ran off the line in consequence of the Primate’s alarming illness, and the extra duties which devolved upon me as Chaplain.

“The completion of your great Facsimiles, No. 2, is now, I suppose, accomplished; and the rejoicing on my part will be the more intense if the Treasury will follow up their former gifts by a repetition. The head of the *Scotch* performance of a kindred nature presents me, unasked, with his three blue Atlas volumes. Did you see the lovely little Charters Lord Howth has—St. Malachy’s grant to the Church and Cardinal Vivian’s Confirmation? The latter is most exquisite. God be praised, the ‘Book of Leinster’ will soon see the light!

“Is there among the Haliday books a Book of Common Prayer, printed at Dublin in 1666 by John Croke, and sold by Samuel Dancer, bookseller, in Castle Street?

“Or can you tell me if you know of any place where said book can be found? Can you tell me anything about Dancer the bookseller? He seems to have been a man of good standing in his day.

“Whenever you are disposed for a run to Armagh, every accommodation of desk, bed, and board are at your service, and with a hearty welcome.”

*From the Same.*

“The Rectory, Tynan, December, 3, 1878.

“No. 2 has arrived, and the shell opened, but I have not had time to do more than take the fish out and lay it on the table. However, there is no fear of its not keeping, and I long to go into Armagh to have a real *inspeximus* of it. I am greatly indebted to you for services in the matter,

which have given me a preference to Marlborough, and Tynan to Blenheim. Long life to you, old fellow!

“Don't forget to get the Howth gems reproduced. I saw them with my namesake, the attorney, in Merrion Square, in a house above Dr. Banks's, within a door or two of Upper Mount Street. Go on and prosper.”

*From Dr. W. K. Sullivan.*

“Queen's College, Cork, December 10, 1878.

“Part II. has been received, and I have done almost nothing else since it came than looking through it. Though it cannot, of course, vie with Part I. in mere artistic interest, it is, in some respects, more valuable. Mr. Crawford has given us the English and Scottish books, so I have an opportunity of contrasting them with yours; but it is not, after all, great praise to say that the Irish is in every way superior to the English. The Scots have not much, and, with the exception of the petition to the Pope and a few Charters, that either is not as interesting as one should expect from a country which, considering its size and position, made itself felt in the world.

“I look upon the Irish Charters with especial interest, and hope to make good use of them. But as I hope to be able in a few days to express in detail the many things I wish to say about it, I will say no more here, especially as my object in writing (and you know I require an object to induce me to write) is not the book, but to try and induce you and your sister to spend a few days with us. It would be a pleasant variety to you, and a real Godsend to us. My wife has been greatly delighted at not having heard from your sister yet, as she thinks the delay is a good sign, and now hopes that my letter will turn the scale, if you ever thought of not coming, which I trust you did not.

“I hope to get the good news that you are both coming soon.”

*From E. Maunde Thompson.*

“British Museum, London, December 10, 1878.

“MY DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“It is indeed very kind of you to make me so handsome a present. Quaritch has sent me the copy. I have written to the editor of the *Academy*, and if he has not already let another occupy the ground, I shall write a notice of the book for that paper. I have had only time to glimpse at it as yet. But what specially pleases me is that you are again in your proper position, which is an immense satisfaction to all right-minded people, and especially to one who truly sympathized with you in the bad treatment you received. Again thanking you,

“Believe me,

“Yours sincerely,

“E. MAUNDE THOMPSON.”

The close of 1877 saw him at work again on the National Manuscripts, and reinstated as editor and inspector for Ireland under the Historical Manuscripts Commission. A memorial to Government, forwarded by powerful hands during the period of his illness, had resulted in securing for him a small pension on the ground of abolition of office. The bright and faithful sister Mary was beside him with her never-failing sympathy, and the brother and sister were surrounded with the warm affection of many friends.

The following extracts from the diary of Denis Florence MacCarthy, who, whether at home or abroad, always lived in close touch with the Gilberts, are contributed to these pages by Mr. John MacCarthy, the poet's son, who has supplied the interpolated passages :—

“1878.

“*April* 18.—Sent copies of ‘*Lyra Hibernica Sacra*’ to Miss Gilbert. . . .

“*April* 25.—Letter from G., asking me to Villa Nova

during my stay in Dublin. Wrote to say I should probably leave on Wedn. evening next. Sent him a copy of F. Davis' Poems.

"*May 2.*—Crossed by the *Connaught*. . . . Found the Gilberts quite well. Received most cordially.

"*May 8.*—Although still suffering from his cough, there is nothing, I believe, in Dr. Madden's condition to create serious uneasiness, except, indeed, what must arise from the circumstance of his advanced age. Gilbert and I paid a visit to Lady Wilde at one of her afternoon-tea receptions. There were several accomplished, learned, and, I have no doubt, beautiful ladies present, but as the room was so dark, I cannot speak with absolute certainty on the last point. Just as I came in, and without Lady Wilde having the least idea that I was in Dublin, she had been showing my 'poor face,' as our American friend, Mr. Bradford, would say, to the aforesaid ladies. In this point of view, if, indeed, there was any point of view, the *Camera Obscura* was rather to my advantage. Another of Lady Wilde's visitors was the celebrated and many-sided Mr. Mahaffy. To this universal genius I was formally introduced, and he to me, by Lady Wilde, she standing between us on the hearthrug, and towering over us in her grand and queenly proportions. . . . I told Lady Wilde about the 'Howling Dervishes of Song,' with which phrase and its probable application she was equally pleased. She mentioned that, having seen some extract from 'The White Czar,' she wrote to a lady in Boston to send her the whole poem. This wish was conveyed to Longfellow, and he at once sent the poem with an interesting letter from himself. . . .

"*July 11.*—Box of beautiful flowers from Miss Gilbert. Sent her a rhyming post-card.

"('In November,' writes Mr. John MacCarthy, 'he visited Dublin on business, staying at Villa Nova, at the pressing invitation of Mr. Gilbert and his sister, from the 6th to the 18th. He mentions meeting there at dinner Dr. Nedley, C. O'Donnel, T. Martin, Dr. Waller, Mr. Garstin, Dr. Banks,

Miss Lawless, and others. He and the Gilberts accepted invitations also from Dr. R. R. Madden, Dr. T. More Madden, John O'Hagan, and Gilbert Sanders.')

"November 8.—Went with G. to the R.I. Academy.

"November 16.—Still with my dear friends. Nothing can exceed their kindness.

"November 18.—Left my dear friends this evening. Crossed in the *Leinster*."

The following passages from letters relate to this visit :—

"On Sunday Gilbert and I called on Gilbert Sanders at Monkstown, and found Dr. Waller there. Mr. Sanders has kindly asked me to meet the doctor at dinner on Thursday next, and the Gilberts will also be with him. They insist on my going. I dined with John O'Hagan on yesterday. G. could not go, as it was the first meeting of the Academy for the year, and the first day of the dinner club.

"('He was again the guest of his kind friends at Villa Nova in the May of this year (1879), when he went over to take part in the celebration in honour of Moore, going to various concerts and other entertainments with them.')

"June 7.—On yesterday I called at Mrs. Jeremiah Dunne's in Fitzwilliam Square, in acceptance of her invitation to witness the athletic sports, lawn-tennis, etc., from her windows. She had a splendid *déjeuner*, and there were numerous ladies to whom I was presented. . . . She was, as usual, most cordial and friendly. The Gilberts afterwards came, and J. T. and I were brought up to one of the higher rooms, where there were two or three ladies. J. T. was so brilliant that one of the ladies called him 'the Sheridan of our day.'

"June 11.—On Monday, 9th, my kind hosts gave another dinner-party. It consisted of Dr. Tisdall, Dr. and Mrs. Lyons, Dr. Banks, Mr. Scott of the *Mail*, Capt. Smyth, lately returned from Cyprus. Tisdall recited in the evening several pieces, including Waller's 'Peter Brown,' which was very successful. . . .

"June 20.—Left my dear friends at Villa Nova.

" *July 1.*—Sent squib to G.

" *July 22.*—Card from Miss Gilbert, who, with J. T., arrived last night at their cousins', 69, Holland Road.

" *July 27.*—F. and I met J. T., his cousins, Mrs. and Miss Gilbert, and his sister at the Cathedral. Walked home with them.

" *July 28.*—Went with Miss Gilbert and Mrs. Gilbert to the British Museum. Asked Dr. Garnett to get permission for them to see the 'Roman de la Rose.' He came with us to the MSS. Department, where Mr. Thompson and Mr. Birch were most attentive. Saw several most beautiful manuscripts, Saxon and others. Walked through the Museum with the ladies. Mem.—Pericles and Nicolini, etc.

" *November 10.*—Went to Dublin.

" *November 12.*—Called at Villa Nova. Saw Miss Gilbert, J. T., and Miss Murray. Asked me to come and dine to-day or to-morrow, but could not.

" In opposition to every remonstrance, my kind friends have invited Martin Haverty, John Cornelius O'Callaghan, and other distinguished scribes of the Gael, to meet me on Sunday at dinner. This will postpone my departure until Monday, when I am determined to close my ears against the seductions of the sirens, and pass, I hope securely, between the Scylla of Howth and the Charybdis of Holyhead. . . . I called on Fr. Russell yesterday, but he was away. G. had a long letter this morning about the Ashburnham Library from Cashel Hoey. . . .

" 1880.

" *May 11.*—Came yesterday to 22, Upper Fitzwilliam Street (at the invitation of Judge and Hon. Mrs. O'Hagan). At dinner this evening: David and Thomas Pigot, Michael Dwyer, Prof. Ornsby, Gilbert. . . . Pleasant dinner.

" *May 23.*—Gilbert called, but I was out.

" *May 24.*—Called at Chasing Cross Hotel to see G. with F. and B. He was out. Left cards and note.

" (' In the course of this and of the following year, my

father mentions further correspondence with Mr. Gilbert, and when he finally came to Ireland, it was Miss Gilbert who selected the cottage in which he died, and their kindness and attention continued unabated until the end.)”

*From Dr. S. R. Gardiner.*

“ June, 1877.

“ If you are not thinking of printing the diary, would you be inclined to edit it for the Camden Society? It is short, and would do for our Miscellany. I do not think it will give you much trouble. If you consent, I would try to get the Council’s approval next month. All the notices about Sir James Ware you would thus get, and we would have the copy made at our expense. The rest I will have copied for you if you like, but there is, I think, nothing about the Ware family in it. It is all about bishops and deans, etc., which Ware probably worked up into his books.”

*From the Chevalier Nigra.*

“ St. Pétersbourg, le 25 Juin, 1877.

“ MONSIEUR,

“ Je suis extrêmement sensible à la pensée que vous avez eu de m’envoyer une copie de votre ‘ Account ’ que j’ai trouvé très intéressant. J’ai aussi lu avec le plus vif intérêt votre lettre du 4 courant. Permettez moi de vous exprimer ici tous mes remerciements.

“ Je n’ai pas reçu la copie qui m’a été destinée du ‘ Fac-similes. ’ Si elle m’a été envoyée, elle a dû rester à l’ambassade d’Italie à Paris, selon toute probabilité. Je vais faire faire les recherches nécessaires à ce sujet, car j’attache beaucoup de prix à cette publication importante, qui certainement doit faire beaucoup d’honneur à son savant éditeur.

“ Par suite de mes occupations diplomatiques, qui se sont encore accrues après mon déplacement de Paris à St. Pétersbourg, j’ai dû interrompre la publication des ‘ Reliquie



Celtiche.' J'espère pouvoir reprendre cette publication après la guerre actuelle. Le second fascicule doit comprendre, entre autre choses, des observations nouvelles sur le MS. de St. Gall, et les gloses du MS. irlandais de Berne du IX. siècle.

“ Je vous remercie beaucoup de l'offre obligeante que vous me faites au sujet des MSS. existant à Dublin, et à l'occasion j'en profiterai avec reconnaissance. J'ai reçu en bon temps les copies du 'Leabhar na h-Uidhri' et du 'Leabhar Breac.' Je fais des vœux pour que vous puissiez bientôt nous donner la reproduction du 'Book of Leinster,' et j'apprends avec une vive satisfaction que vous êtes près de terminer ce long travail. J'espère que M. Ascoli commencera prochainement la publication du MS. de Milan qui est extrêmement important pour l'ancienneté et la quantité de gloses irlandaises. A l'aide de toutes ces publications on pourra enfin compiler le *glossaire* irlandais (surtout de l'ancien irlandais), qui est un grand *desideratum* de tous ceux qui s'occupent de langues celtiques. Comme les formes les plus anciennes et les mieux conservées de la langue irlandaise se trouvent dans les MSS. du IX<sup>m</sup>e siècle, je crois qu'il serait imprudent de penser à la compilation d'un glossaire irlandais avant la publication des gloses de Milan. Ces gloses, avec celles des MSS. de St. Gall, de Turin, de Carlsruhe, de Würzburg, de Berne, de Vienne, et des plus anciens MSS. insulaires, doivent former la base solide et sûre de tout glossaire irlandais rédigé dans un but strictement scientifique.

“ Je n'ai pas pu jusqu'ici me rendre compte de la discussion qui s'est élevée entre l'Académie Royale d'Irlande et M. Stokes, au sujet de l'exactitude des publications précitées. Mais aussitôt que j'aurai un peu de temps disponible je me propose de me mettre au courant de cette occasion, et si vous pourrez me procurer un exemplaire du rapport de la commission nommée par l'Académie Royale je le recevrai avec reconnaissance et je le lirai avec intérêt et avec profit.

“ J'oubliai de vous dire que j'ai reçu aussi en bon temps les précieuses publications du Dr. Sullivan. Mais je regrette

de n'avoir pas encore eu le temps d'étudier la dernière, qui doit être l'une des plus importantes, savoir 'Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish.' J'en commençais la lecture lorsque j'ai dû quitter Paris, et m'adonner à d'autres occupations.

"Si vous avez quelques publications à m'envoyer, je vous prie de l'adresser à M. Catalani, secrétaire de l'ambassade d'Italie à Londres. Je lui écrirai de vouloir bien se charger de me faire parvenir ce que vous aurez la bonté de lui envoyer à mon adresse.

"Il ne me reste qu'à vous remercier encore de votre lettre obligeante et à vous prier de vouloir bien agréer l'expression de ma considération la plus distinguée.

"Votre dévoué,

"NIGRA.

"P.S.—Si vous avez l'occasion de vous rencontrer avec le digne Lord Talbot de Malahide, veuillez, je vous prie, lui transmettre mes vœux sincères pour sa santé, et mes meilleurs souvenirs."

*From Thomas Kerlake.*

"14, West Park, Bristol, June 7, 1877.

"DEAR SIR,

"I stumbled upon the Bristol colony at Dublin in the course of examining the topographical distribution of the dedications of St. Werburgh in consequence of the project to sell and destroy our central church, and was at first puzzled with the outlying one at Dublin. At first I was content to attribute it to intercourse with Chester, where was also a St. Bridget that might have come by a reverse of the same process, until I met with the visit of King Dermot to Bristol and his probable interview with Strongbow here suggested by Seyer in his 'Memoirs (not the Charters) of Bristol,' 4to, 1821. I then turned to Hogenberg's plan of Dublin, and was struck by the parallel of the names of the

intra-mural churches with those of Bristol, and turning over Archdall's 'Monasticon' and some other books, exchanged what I had said about Chester for the paragraph about Bristol. Seyer is likely to have done all that Bristol archives could have helped him to, for they were placed at his command, and he had perseverance and curiosity that would not have lost sight of anything to his purpose. Our St. Ewen was constantly written St. Audenus in charters, and sometimes Owen, but St. Ewen survived here as the name of the church. But the identity of the name vanishes off on all sides into the confines of the Norman S. Ouen, the Cornish Uny (perhaps Irish), the Irish Eoghan, the Cambrian Eugenius, and variations and confluences of them, and perhaps of others like them.

"If you have not seen Seyer's 'Memoirs of Bristol,' I think his work will be to your purpose. I believe many of the seaport towns of east Ireland contained Bristol colonies. Many years ago, a correspondent of mine at Youghal claimed a descent of that borough from Bristol. In fact, the great intercourse between Ireland and the Bristol Channel from much earlier times seems to be a subject that would be of great interest. You will remember the rebuke of Bishop Wulfstan to Bristol for its slave trade with Ireland. The Irish dedications on both sides of the Bristol Channel are a remarkable evidence of a still earlier intercourse which I have endeavoured to bring into notice in a paper which I presumed to read in Cornwall last summer, and which is printing for next number of the Journal of the British Archæological Association; but to do it justice, Welsh and Irish learning are both wanted, and to me they are both wanting. The Rev. J. F. Shearman, of Howth, is working out the Irish side of it with great skill and learning, but he keeps only on the Irish side, and does not bridge St. George's Channel, and the names are rather distorted when they land here.

"I read your account of the National Manuscripts with much interest, and derived information from it bearing upon

what I have said above. My meddling with such things is only recent and accidental, and, I am conscious, is also presumptuous, and I ought therefore to apologise for enlarging upon it to such an accomplished and eminent an expert as you.

“I am, Dear Sir,

“Your obedient Servant,

“THOMAS KERSLAKE.”

*From W. de G. Birch.*

“British Museum, London, July 12, 1877.

“We have not acquired many new seals lately: the largest collection being that of H. Laing, devoted in the main to Scottish seals. There are among them, however, a few that may be worth your examining when you have an opportunity. With regard to my work on the Utrecht Psalter, I cannot say that I have adopted any previous views of the age of the manuscript. Having gone into the subject in an independent and more exhaustive manner than any other writers, my opinion is founded upon new and more direct evidence. But you should endeavour to acquire the work for your official library of books of reference, for, if I may say so without appearing to be boastful, there is much in it, apart from the history of the Utrecht Psalter, calculated to be of great assistance to the general student of Palæography, and in this class we are delighted to hail you as a prominent person. I shall be glad to show you any new things when you are in London.”

*From D. F. MacCarthy.*

“Boulogne, July 18, 1877.

“I am glad that you thought my letter on the subject of Tom Moore of sufficient importance to send to Lady Wilde. I confess I was rather surprised that the editor of the *Athenæum* gave it so much space. Moore has been so persistently run down, or attempted to be run, by the present

conceited school of philosophical critics, that I longed for an opportunity of saying a word or two to show that he was 'still remembered in Erin,' or perhaps by those who ought to be in Erin. Just before I left London I was at an evening reception in the house of Mrs. William Rossetti, in Euston Square. The rooms were crowded with artists and literary people of every kind. Among these I had the pleasure of meeting the wife of my namesake, Mr. Justin MacCarthy, one of the ablest novelists of the day. A semi-German lady, a great authority on Shelley matters, was also there. I endeavoured to say a word or two in favour of the Bard of Erin, but found it would not do—his flowers are all artificial, etc.—so that I was not sorry that in the *Athenæum* of the following day or so my indirect protest on the subject of Moore appeared.

"There is little chance of finding the *Alithinologia* and its supplement, 1664-1667, in Boulogne. There is only one old bookshop in the town, and from my inspection of the Public Library in the Grande Rue on Sunday last, I have little hope of ever seeing them there. Perhaps you would transcribe for me the full title of the recent German edition of the 'Legends of St. Brendan,' a copy of which is in the Library of the R.I.A. I have a copy of the volume myself, but it is now boxed up and out of my reach. In alluding to the Moore letter, I forgot to mention the reply which the *Athenæum* of last Saturday (July 14) was requested to give to my statement. It appears that the only subscriptions received in a period of seven years were from myself! Thus it would appear that the only person in these degenerate days that would make the slightest pecuniary sacrifice to honour the memory of Moore is one of the poorest and humblest of his own class. John has doubtless paid you a visit before this. If you look into the last number of *Notes and Queries*, July 14, 1877, p. 35, you will find an interesting allusion to him. You, perhaps, may not know that he is tremendously deep in the Phœnician and other easily acquired languages. The following refers to some

paper of his on a cognate subject, and is signed by the name of 'Hyde Clarke:' 'Mr. MacCarthy's hint is a good one as to the name Assyrian. It bears better on Dr. Deacke's discovery than he allows.' What a pity these studies and this learning cannot be turned to some profitable account! I should have been delighted to meet my old friends, Dr. R. R. Madden and W. K. Sullivan, and to have made the acquaintance of Oscar Wilde, who has so much amiable enthusiasm about everything that is beautiful and good."

*From Dr. S. R. Gardiner.*

"Zetland House, The Promenade,  
"Bridlington Quay,  
"August 2, 1877.

"I have asked Dobb to send you Sweetman's Calendar (vol. 2), which I think you will like to review. I trust you received a 'History of Belfast' for the same purpose. I shall be back in London on September 6. Could you let me have something on the Belfast book? We are having the most wretchedly wet and gloomy weather here, which takes all the enjoyment out of a holiday."

*From the Same.*

"November 6.

"I have been intending to write to you for some days to ask you whether your book is to be published for a society or by subscription. If the latter, I should very much like to put my name down for it. I look forward to reading it with the greatest interest. I am ashamed to trouble you, but I am very anxious to have the reviews you promised us as soon as possible."

*From the Same.*

"November 28.

"We should be delighted to have an article on Davies, if, as I suppose, it is a new book. Your proof will be sent you in a few days. Would it be advisable to add the proper

names which Sweetman disguises? They are, of course, familiar to you, but may not be obvious to all here. Did you note any special absurdity in the Plantation? If you thought you had time to do it, I should like to send it to you. It would naturally have gone to Dr. Russell, but I hear he is ill from the effects of an accident."

*From the Same.*

"December 18.

"Thank you for Grosart's notes. I sifted about five large bundles of documents, and I suppose Davies' letter slipped me, unless my notion of what is important and Grosart's may have differed.

"I dare say you will be able to make an article on Davies quite lively, as he is so interesting a writer, in great contrast to Sweetman's Calendar, the article on which will go in this week I hope. I found my notice of the Plantation of Ulster was already in type. I enclose it, so that if you think it good enough, or the book is not worth more, it can go in. If you have more to say, and will let me know, I will have it cancelled."

H. S. Sweetman, Record Office, London, writes (December 13)—

"In the letter which you were good enough to write me to Dublin last autumn you mentioned that you had some originals of records abstracted by me in the second volume of my calendar. Do you happen to have among them the original of the Inquisition of Mortimer's lands, abstracted in pp. 466-468 of that volume? If so, I hope that you will kindly allow me, when next I go to Dublin, an opportunity of seeing and taking notes of that original, as the record here is quite illegible in parts. I should thus be enabled, when I give an *Addendum*, as I shall have to do at a future date, to fill up some of the blanks which I was unfortunately obliged to leave, for the above reason, in my abstract of the record here.

“Dr. Gardiner, the antiquarian editor of the *Academy* here, told me a couple of months ago that you were about to review my second volume in its pages. I was glad to hear that the work was to be undertaken by one so thoroughly competent, especially in regard to records and Irish history, as yourself. I am anxious to read your review, and hope that it will be out soon.”

*From Rev. F. E. Warren, B.D.*

“St. John’s College, Oxford,

“October 13, 1877.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“When I was staying with Mr. Bell at Burnt-island recently, he showed me an allusion in your handwriting to an Irish Missal, which you are describing in your forthcoming volume. He promised to ascertain for me what Missal was alluded to. But as his words in a letter just received are not explicit, I am taking the liberty of writing to you myself for this information. I am merely anxious for the name of the possessor, the place where kept, and the probable date of the Missal, if of a later date than the eleventh century. I should be glad to know whether, like the Drummond and Rosslyn Missals, it is merely the Sarum use with variations. I am engaged on some account of early British Liturgies, in the widest sense, from a purely liturgical, not a palæographical, point of view, and these points of information would be most acceptable if you will forgive the liberty which an utter stranger takes in thus writing to you.

“I remain, yours faithfully,

“F. E. WARREN, B.D.,

“Vice-President of S. John’s College, Oxford.”



*From Dr. Robert Travers.*

“ Williamstown, Blackrock, co. Dublin,

“ November 4, 1877.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ In reply to your note of yesterday relative to the Manuscript Diary of Archbishop Narcissus Marsh, all the information I can give is this :—

“ It came by bequest from the Library of Bishop Stearne (Clogher), and had been bound up in a volume with some printed tracts. This appeared to be an inappropriate condition, yet it was only with great reluctance that the authorities assented to its being separated and made a volume by itself. Few people knew of its existence previous to the year 1833, when I printed some extracts from it in the notice of the Library, which I prefixed to the catalogue of the Duplicates sold in that year. The late Bishop Mant (Down and Connor), who published some extracts from it several years later, probably derived his knowledge of it from my catalogue of the Duplicates; yet he has somehow got the credit of being the first to communicate it to the public. Dr. Todd employed a transcriber to copy the Diary, and from that transcript, which was very incorrect, was published the entire in the *British Magazine*. It appeared in portions through several successive numbers of that periodical, as I have reason to recollect, from having had the trouble imposed on me of correcting the proof-sheets and revises by comparison with the Library manuscript, and had then to transmit them to the editor of the magazine in London. Though I had done all this with great care, and had much expense in postages (at that time much heavier than now), it was all taken as matter of course, unworthy of acknowledgment. This is, however, but one, and a trivial one, of the many instances of ingratitude and injustice I have experienced in connection with work to which I have sacrificed the greater part of my life, of which experiences I may have some better opportunity of giving a relation.

“In the account of the Library which I furnished to Croly’s Medical Directory of 1843, I also introduced some passages from Archbishop Marsh’s Manuscript Diary.

“Yours very truly,

“ROBERT TRAVERS.”

*From Rev. F. E. Warren, B.D.*

“St. John’s College, Oxford,

“March 25, 1878.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“My best thanks are due to you for the copy of current *Academy* containing a personal announcement with regard to yourself and your interesting account of the C.C.C. Oxford Missal. I have ascertained that at any moment I may get leave from the College to print the Missal in full, as proposed by Mr. Bradshaw in *Academy* No. 297. But by itself it would have too limited a circulation to defray the cost of putting into type. All my efforts to get at the Stowe Missal have been hitherto unavailing.

“I remain, yours faithfully,

“F. E. WARREN, B.D.”

## CHAPTER XIV

1879-1880

Literary Life and Works—"Contemporary History of Affairs in Ireland, 1641-1652"—Completion of the Facsimiles of National Manuscripts of Ireland—"History of the Irish Confederation and the War in Ireland"—Rinuccini Manuscript Memoirs—Trustee of the National Library of Ireland—Letters.

GILBERT was now working with all his former activity, and the result was very great. Besides his larger undertakings, he contributed to the *Academy*, the *Athenæum*, and other reviews, valuable articles on learned subjects. The multitudinous letters written to him during these years reflect in some degree his working life, and almost all would be found interesting if not too numerous for the limits of this book. Letters from transcribers and engravers, the former connected with the British Museum, Bodleian Library, and other such great centres, remain in large numbers, throwing light on what may be called the mechanical part of archi-vistic work, which "mechanical" work must, however, be done by men of special learning. Gilbert was on the most friendly terms with many able transcribers, and their letters are evidence of his generous spirit in dealing with all whom he employed during the long years in which he pursued his untiring researches. His appearance in the Bodleian Library was always affectionately greeted, and the Rev. H. O. Coxe, the then librarian, was his particular friend. Another class of letters, asking for information on every imaginable subject, might supply amusing reading. Gilbert was supposed to know the past of every family, and of their

most distant connections (of whom his correspondents themselves were ignorant), not only belonging to Ireland, but even slightly linked with that country ; to be able to identify an individual to whom a tombstone had been erected in some Irish graveyard centuries (more or less) ago, name and date being unknown to the anxious inquirer. The minute histories of portraits, bells, obscure churches, arts, trades, occupations of all kinds and all times, and the persons concerned in them, never to mention books or manuscripts, were supposed to be so present to his mind that he could send by return of post a complete treatise on the subject in question to an unknown correspondent.

One stranger writes—

“I am sure that in the course of your researches you must have made valuable notes on — [a special subject mentioned], and I hope you will be good enough to send them to me, as material for a book that I am thinking of writing.”

A considerable share of his time was willingly given in response to such letters of inquiry as proceeded from sources worthy of attention ; and he often spent hours taken from his own urgent work, in collating and preparing condensed information to be despatched to a fellow-labourer who had appealed to him for help.

In 1879 he began to publish the “Contemporary History of Affairs in Ireland,” the first of his great works dealing with the stormy period of the war in Ireland, extending from the year 1641 to the year 1652, printing for the first time a unique and remarkable manuscript entitled “The Aphorismical Discovery of Treasonable Faction,” which he had discovered among the muniments of Trinity College, Dublin. In these volumes he has given a historical account of the subject-matter of an original record made during the period of the war ; and each volume of the “Aphorismical Discovery” is followed by an appendix of valuable letters and documents—a harvest of extraordinary research. Many of the writings are here printed for the first time, and the whole

forms a mass of contemporary evidence newly brought to light, and reflecting the thoughts, motives, and methods, as well as the movements, of the Irish at a critical period of their history.

"The object of the present work," writes Gilbert, "is to furnish original and authentic contemporary materials towards elucidating the history of the important affairs in which Ireland and her people were concerned from 1641 to the close of 1652. The hitherto received accounts of the transactions of those years in Ireland have been based mainly on statements issued under Governmental licence, or compiled by writers influenced by political and religious prejudices and personal interests. For the purposes of history, it is desirable to collect and render accessible such still surviving unpublished and rare materials as may assist us to estimate truly the acts and motives of the various parties who engaged in those grave civil and military contests.

"The manuscript of the 'Aphorismical Discovery' was written between 1652 and 1660. About 1697 it was in possession of John Madden, President of the Dublin College of Physicians. From him it passed into the library of John Stearne, Protestant Bishop of Clogher, who, in 1741, presented it with other books to Trinity College, Dublin, where it is still preserved. For its curious title it depends on the whim or prudence of the author, who opens each of his chapters with an aphorism applicable to his narrative, for which aphorisms he 'seems to have been mainly indebted to Sir Robert Dallington's compilations from Guicciardini, published in 1613 and 1629,' the term 'faction' being used to designate the parties moving in opposition to those who, as he conceived, acted for the true interest of his countrymen. He writes as a soldier and an eye-witness, and is evidently a man of learning, and familiar with Latin, Spanish, Italian, French, and Gaelic. His language is the English spoken in Ireland in the first half of the seventeenth century, with a mixture of Gaelic, Spanish, and military terms. The style is colloquial, humorous, declamatory, pathetic, occasionally

obscure through effort at condensation. He writes in sympathy with his countrymen who, devoted to Charles I., had taken arms for the protection, as they alleged, of their own lives, properties, and rights, against the oppressions and hostile designs of the dominant Puritan faction. The narrative abounds in interesting, minute, and authentic details, not elsewhere so fully on record, in connection with the personages chiefly concerned in the transactions chronicled in its pages. It is of special value in reference to the views and acts of descendants of the old Celtic race of the north of Ireland, represented by Owen Roe O'Neill and his 'Ulster party,' as distinguished from the Irish of the other provinces as well as from the Anglo-Irish and the Irish Scots."

*From Dr. S. R. Gardiner.*

"South View, Widmore Road, Bromley, Kent,  
"November 24, 1879.

"I am getting more interested in the appearance of your book on the Irish Rebellion, as I am approaching the subject more closely. I am now working at Strafford's trial, so that I shall be at the Irish Rebellion by next spring or summer. Is there any hope of your book being out by that time?"

*From the Same.*

"December 9, 1879.

"I am sorry the Irish articles are bad, but we can't get Irish scholars to help us. You have no time, and those we tried had no time either, or insisted on filling half a number in reviewing a single book in a most minute manner. If you can suggest any happy medium, *Eris mihi magnus Apollo.*"

*From the Same.*

"March 25, 1880.

"I have at last got to the Irish Rebellion, and was intending to write to consult you. In the first place, can

you tell me anything of a book called 'Hibernia Anglicana'? Froude quotes some remarkable things from it about an intrigue of the King's with Antrim in 1641, but my experience is not such as to allow me to take anything from Froude's statement that he has seen it. I cannot find the book in the Museum by that title. Perhaps there is an author's name to it, or it may be published by some society.

"Then, can you tell me whether I ought to see the volumes of the Depositions in Trinity College Library, or whether Lecky's account of them is sufficiently accurate, and whether there are materials at Dublin unpublished which I ought to see?"

*From the Same.*

"March 30, 1880.

"I am sorry to have troubled you about the 'Hibernia Anglicana,' as I turned up the proper reference this afternoon in Prendergast's 'Cromwellian Settlement.'

"The question, however, is not about Cox's own work, but about the paper printed in the Appendix xlix. as containing Antrim's account of certain secret negotiations with Charles I. in 1641. I am strongly inclined to accept the story as substantially true; it chimes in wonderfully with what I have gathered from various sources about Charles's proceedings in England.

"Lecky's account in chapter vi. in the second volume of the 'History of England in the Eighteenth Century' seems to me to be singularly fair and painstaking, in so far as I have yet been able to understand the matter.

"I shall be very glad of your Report on the Depositions. I dare say Cartwright at the Record Office will let me see a proof when ready, if you allow it.

"I shall be extremely grateful for the new volumes of the 'Aphorismical Discovery.' The description of the return of the Agents and the naming of Ormond in connection with Sir P. O'Neill, which look odd (vol. i., pp. 11, 12), seem to

corroborate the Antrim story, as an indistinct memory of it. I think, too, I have found something in the Rossetti letters which looks the same way; but that I must see to."

*From the Same.*

"March 31, 1880.

"I must thank you at once for your book. The letters about Drogheda are very interesting. I can see how extremely useful it will all be to me some day. I was reading to-day a curious letter from the Council to Vane, April 24, 1641, expressing their strong view that the Plantation of Connaught ought to be proceeded with. I don't think it has been noticed, but it is a clear exposition of the state of feeling about these plantations in the Dublin Government."

*From the Same.*

"October 26, 1880.

"Thank you very heartily for the completion of your valuable present. I hope I may live to work the mine which you have opened."

*From Dr. R. R. Madden.*

"3, Vernon Terrace, Booterstown,

"May 12, 1880.

"MY DEAR GILBERT,

"I received on Saturday the four volumes of the 'Contemporary History of Ireland.' What vast labour that great work must have occasioned you!

"I was glad to see our friend MacCarthy to-day. I was trying to persuade him, that although a man may live anywhere for a certain number of years, he can only die decently in his own land; ergo, he should think of coming back as soon as he could.

"Yours, my dear Gilbert,

"Ever faithfully,

"R. R. MADDEN."



With this inauguration of his works on the Irish wars of the seventeenth century, Gilbert entered on a new phase of his many-sided career, and took upon himself the responsibility of giving to his age, before it might be too late to baffle the destroying industry of the damp and the moth, those truths which he knew lay hidden between mouldering vellums and behind barriers of falsehood. Being on the less favoured side in religion and politics, he had nothing to hope for in the way of that encouragement to genius and labour which, under other circumstances, would have been eagerly accorded to him in his native city.

Truly John Gilbert, the elder, spoke shrewdly as a Protestant when he warned his Catholic wife that in baptizing their boy in her own faith she was doing him a wrong with regard to this world. He spoke at the period described by Macaulay in 1837, but Gilbert, owing perhaps to the peculiar difficulties of the career on which his genius thrust him, was destined to realize the truth of his father's prediction all along the line of his indomitable and single-handed labours. Resolved to publish nothing on a darkened page of history unaccompanied by the printing of the incontrovertible document, nothing that could be rejected as the "partisan" writing of "a Jacobite and a Romanist," he continued to issue limited editions to subscribers of important works in elucidation of that obscurity which had hitherto been the stronghold of falsehood. The books, produced in the best style of workmanship by Dublin printers and binders, under his own supervision, were anxiously looked for and eagerly welcomed by the learned of all lands, and took their honoured places on the shelves of the great libraries of the world.

Any one who observes the method and manner of his work must perceive that no historical writer of reputation and authority was ever less of a partisan than Gilbert. His contempt for pages of brilliant falsehood determined him on reserving his own personality as a writer behind the naked statements of the contemporary document, while with every

written word of his own he illumined, but forbore to exaggerate or varnish.

For these reasons his weightiest works are hardly those which all who run may read. Eyes accustomed to take their information from posters seldom look into finer print, and the hasty gleaner of a popular book of history will content himself with a dubious glance at the lettering on the backs of a row of volumes of the "Contemporary History of Affairs in Ireland," or the "History of the Irish Confederation and the War in Ireland."

About this time he began to find his position in his work somewhat anomalous. His name, his outward surroundings and associations, placed him in unreal lights from the different points of view of various critics or mere careless observers. While facing the fire of the enemy on one side, he was looked on coldly from a distance by many on the other. A letter remains, written to him by a priest, his friend, relating with humour a recent conversation with a Catholic dignitary whom he had met in the street, and greeted with "Have you seen Gilbert's latest book?" "Read Gilbert?" cried the Catholic dignitary, "I would not read a word the fellow writes. He is a Protestant, and a bigoted Trinity College man!"

Well might he have cried, "A plague on both your houses!" but his unfailing sense of the humorous invariably came to his aid on such trying occasions. He held on his way, undisturbed by applause and undaunted by censure; and the genial, the liberal, and the wise of every creed and country were eager to accord their appreciation of his genius and his courage, and were glad to call him "friend."

Proceeding with the production in facsimile of his selection of the National Manuscripts of Ireland, he continued to issue the condensed history of the different periods to which they belonged, which he modestly entitled an "Account" of the manuscripts.

On receiving the third instalment of this work, the author of "The Cromwellian Settlement" wrote to him—

*From John P. Prendergast.*

“127, Strand Road, Sandymount, Dublin,

“April 20, 1880.

“MY DEAR GILBERT,

“You have made me your debtor for the third part of the commentary and description of the National Manuscripts. It at once sent me to read again the two first parts before entering on this latest one; and slightly less ignorant than when I read them a couple of years ago, I can the better appreciate their value, which is enormous.

“Yours very truly,

“JOHN P. PRENDERGAST.”

In 1880 the work was completed, and Gilbert wrote as follows on the matter to his friend, Sir Edward Sullivan, Baronet, Master of the Rolls in Ireland:—

*From J. T. Gilbert to the Master of the Rolls.*

“Oxford, Bodleian Library,

“November 20, 1880.

“DEAR MASTER OF THE ROLLS,

“I am happy to be able to write that I have now brought to a most satisfactory conclusion all my work on the collation and revision of the plates from the collections in England for the National Manuscripts of Ireland, in accordance with the arrangements made by H.M. Stationery Office, London. The authorities of that department have afforded me every facility, and this has been of the greatest advantage to the work. The coloured plates, including that containing the contemporary miniature of Oliver Cromwell, are really magnificent. The elaborate character of the plates required the minutest care and precision, but they will now be printed off as rapidly as practicable. On my return to Dublin on the 22nd, I will have the plates in progress, then finished without delay.

“I remain,

“Your Lordships, very faithfully,

“JOHN T. GILBERT.”

A passage taken from the "Account of Facsimiles of National Manuscripts of Ireland," in which the editor announces the conclusion of his long labours on the work, explains his design, and his own estimate of his success in carrying it out—

"This work is now concluded, and, so far as practicable, it has been carried out by the editor in accordance with his original design, as indicated at the commencement of the undertaking.

"The design was that the publication should constitute a comprehensive palæographic series for Ireland, furnishing characteristic specimens of the documents that have come down from each of the classes which in past ages formed principal elements in her population, or exercised an influence in her affairs; and, with these reproductions, combining facsimiles of writings connected with eminent personages or transactions of importance in her annals down to the early part of the eighteenth century.

"The editor does not desire to enter here upon details of the many obstacles which he had to encounter in the progress of the work. The volumes will, he trusts, be found as free from defects as could be expected in a publication of such magnitude and comprehensiveness, dealing with recondite materials, and comprising writings of various ages, classes, and languages.

"The value and interest of the series has been much augmented by the hitherto unpublished documents included in it through the liberality of the Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of Leinster, the Marquis of Ormonde, the Marquis of Drogheda, the Earl of Leicester, the Earl of Fingall, the Provost and Senior Fellows of Trinity College, Dublin; the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin; the Municipal Corporations of Dublin, Kilkenny, and Waterford.

"The editor desires to acknowledge his obligations also to William Hardy, F.S.A., Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in England; Edward A. Bond, LL.D.; E. Maunde Thompson, Keeper of the Manuscripts, British Museum; E. B. Nicholson, Bodley's Librarian, Oxford; S. W. Kershaw,

Librarian to the Archbishop of Canterbury ; Hans Claude Hamilton, F.S.A. ; and Alfred Kingston, Esq., London.

“To the Right Honourable Sir Edward Sullivan, Baronet, now Lord Chancellor of Ireland, the editor is indebted for the continuous interest taken by him in the work from its commencement to its conclusion.

“JOHN T. GILBERT.”

“January 23, 1884.”

The undertaking which he had now most deeply at heart was the continuation of his elucidation of an obscure passage of his country's story ; and he proceeded to publish his “History of the Irish Confederation and the War in Ireland, 1641-1652,” which was another narrative of the war in Ireland from 1641 to the conclusion of the treaty for the cessation of hostilities between England and the Irish in 1643, and, like the former work on the same period, included a mass of contemporary documents and letters, showing the movements of the Irish confederates, and of Rinuccini, the Pope's Nuncio, during his visit to Ireland. The manuscript of the narrative, at one time the property of Arthur, Earl of Anglesey, the friend of Richard Bellings,<sup>1</sup> was identified by Gilbert as the long missing work known to have been written by Bellings. The historical consequence of the matter printed for the first time in this work was admitted to be incalculable. As the author of the “Aphorismical Discovery of Treasonable Faction” is the Irish contemporary historian of the war in the north, so is Bellings the exponent of the doings of the Confederates of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught. Gilbert's historical “Introduction” illumines the fascinating narrative, and is accompanied by correspondence and documents of the Confederation, and of the administrators of the English Government in Ireland. A list given of the noblemen and gentlemen of Ireland outlawed for high treason is of personal interest to many in the present day. The volumes are

<sup>1</sup> Author of “A Sixth Book to the Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia,” and Secretary to the Supreme Council of the Irish Confederation.

enriched with portraits, facsimiles of original letters and documents, seals and coins of the confederation, with maps and plans of battlefields and fortifications. For this work Gilbert's labours of research were immense. He had been laying up stores of documents, unearthed by his patient perseverance during a long course of years, riveting connecting links, and gathering treasure of corroborative evidence. "They will never be able to blacken that period again," he said, speaking with satisfaction of the admirable conduct of the Irish Confederates as the light of truth had revealed it.

*From Lord Arundel of Wardour.*

"November 18, 1880.

"If it should happen that you wished to make any further researches here, and it was convenient to you to take us on your return route, we should be delighted to see you.

"I know no reason why the cypher should not be that of Christopher Bellings. I found it in a book of memoranda referring to Irnham Hall in Lincolnshire, which passed from the Paganel, or Pagnells, to the Luttrells, and then to the Thimalbys and Conquests, from whom it came to my great-grandfather, and passed from him, or rather from my great-grandmother, to the Cliffords. I mention this as showing how scattered these memorials of the Bellings may be, so it is not at all impossible that the poem may be now at Stonyhurst, in what is called the Arundel Library<sup>1</sup> there. I think there were also printed papers or manuscripts connected with Ireland in the bequest to Stonyhurst, which were considered important, but they may have been the Grenville papers, and, if so, not connected with the period in which you are interested."

*From the Same.*

"September 21, 1880.

"I happened to mention the Ormonde deed (which I showed you here) to my neighbour, Mr. Alfred Morrison. It

<sup>1</sup> The tenth Lord Arundel left his library to Stonyhurst College in Lancashire.

interested him, as he is acquainted with Mr. Cheney of Badger Hall, Staffordshire, also with another bachelor brother, who has a property in the midland county ; they are the last representatives of Sir — Cheney, who fought and distinguished himself at the battle of Bosworth, and who is, I presume, identical with the Sir Cheney to whom the Earl of Ormonde conveyed Wardour. By-the-by, Mr. Morrison tells me that he has recently purchased one of the three letters Mary Queen of Scots wrote the night before her execution. It is written in a clear but by no means flowing hand, almost without an erasure. It is a letter of considerable length.

“I hope you had a pleasant passage across sea. Is Gilbert the contracted form of Gislebert ?”

*From the Same.*

“November 2.

“I had not known until you informed me that the experiment of viceroys, or lord lieutenants, for the four provinces of Ireland had been tried. What, however, I intended in my remark was more this, that if, historically, that mode of government had survived to these times, Ireland might perhaps be better governed now on those lines. Formerly centralization was the object aimed at, but now the object would rather seem to be how best to attract capital and secure residence on the part of the landlords, to which local viceroalties would tend, but just now the Irish people seem intent on hooting capital out of the country and shooting landlords, in which case they cannot also have them as residents.

*From Lord Acton.*

“Bavaria, July, 1880.

“I should have been extremely glad to be able to offer any contribution to the great work you are publishing. No letter of Ussher’s has ever fallen in my way referring to his

projected change. It is spoken of sometimes in Catholic writings of the day, perhaps also by Presbyterians. The common report was that he had put himself into communication with Richelieu. The particular point I once alluded to was, that the negotiation was carried on by the Nuncio, and by friars who corresponded with him, and whose letters I had seen. There was nothing under the Archbishop's own hand."

*From the Rev. Alexander Napier.*

"Holkham, Norfolk, September, 1880.

"I have received Lord Leicester's directions to forward to you the Nuncio's Memoirs in 8 vols. folio (MS.). It will give me great pleasure to carry out his Lordship's directions."

The memoirs referred to were the famous Rinuccini Manuscripts, which were thus entrusted to Gilbert's keeping, and of them Mr. William Hardy wrote from the Record Office, London—

"I have read with great interest your communication of the 6th inst. I conclude that the work you allude to as having been used by Carte, and now lent you by its owner, the Earl of Leicester, will remain in your care for yet some time. There is no need, therefore, to determine at present whether a good calendar of its contents would not be preferable to its publication *in extenso*."

Government ultimately refused to publish the Rinuccini Manuscripts, and Gilbert, having made his report upon them for the Historical Manuscripts Commission, had a transcript of the whole made for his own purposes, forming a series of large volumes.

In 1880 the appointment announced in the following letter was a source of much satisfaction to Gilbert, as affording him opportunities for taking a practical interest in the choice of books for the reading public of Ireland :—



*From Norman MacLeod.*

“ Science and Art Department, London,

“ November 22, 1880.

“ SIR,

“ I am directed by the Lords of the Committee of Council on Education to inform you that you have been nominated by His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant to fill the vacancy on the Council of Trustees of the National Library of Ireland caused by the death of the late Dr. Russell.

“ Their Lordships desire me to express a hope that you will give them the benefit of your advice and assistance in this office.

“ I am to draw your attention to the 5th paragraph of Lord Sandon’s letter to the Royal Dublin Society, of the 9th February, 1876, of which a copy is enclosed.

“ I have the honour to be, sir,

“ Your obedient servant,

“ NORMAN MACLEOD.”

On the occasion of this appointment the late Bernard Quaritch, the famous bookseller and bibliophile, wrote to him with characteristic frankness—

*From Bernard Quaritch.*

“ 15, Piccadilly, London, November 27, 1880.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I am very glad you got the appointment of Trustee to the National Library of Ireland, as I fear you are the only scholar now living who can claim to be thoroughly imbued with Celtic scholarship, and who at the same time knows the history of Ireland from all its aspects.

“ I hope you will have both power and the financial means to carry out your plans.

“ My late excellent friend, Dr. Russell, was too amiable, too much of a general scholar, and not enough of the Irish scholar, to have done full justice to his trust.

“I love despotism, and I hope you will have despotic power. An enlightened despotism is the best of all governments.

“Shall you have the power to wake up Trinity College from its state of torpor? The library there has wanted a master for many years.

“You will find me at all times ready to serve you.

“I remain, dear sir,

“Yours very truly,

“BERNARD QUARITCH.”

From the many congratulations on this appointment a letter is selected as coming from one whose large mind and noble qualities were appreciated and admired by Gilbert, and whose constant friendship he prized :—

*From the Marchioness of Ormonde.*

“The Holmwood Lodge, Dorking, Surrey,

“December 7, 1880.

“DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“Your letter failed to reach me as soon as I could have wished, hindering me therefore from expressing what real, true pleasure it is to me to hear that the Government have a due appreciation of your talents and merits, of which the public have for long been well aware, and that they have made the very proper and wise choice of you as Trustee of the National Library. I am very glad, and congratulate you from my heart upon the appointment, which is so complimentary and so just.

“It is too good of you, and I hardly like to say yes to your generous proposal to send me a copy of the last portion of the Kilkenny Castle Papers, for it seems encroaching too much on your kindness. But valued it would be very highly, you know, by me. Should you carry out your intention, I return to Park Lane on Saturday. I was so sorry to find

you had been in town during my absence, for I should have enjoyed having the pleasure of seeing you.

“ Believe me,

“ Yours very truly,

“ FRs. J. ORMONDE.”

*From Lord Talbot de Malahide.*

“ Algiers, December.

“ Pray send me a copy of Davis' ballads. I have got the prospectus of the 'History of the Irish Confederation.' Pray reserve me a copy of it. The weather here is delightful, but there are no visitors. Sir John Lubbock has just come out for a short time, and has a villa here. There is also a small Irish colony: two Lady Kingstons, Lady Louisa Tenison, and the Smith Barrys. Pray accept the compliments of the season. As for ourselves, I never expect to outlive another happy Christmas.”

*From J. J. Cartwright, Secretary to the Public Record Office, London.*

“ Some time ago I think you named one or two good men as desirable new Commissioners to represent Ireland. Do you mind giving us a few suggestions in this matter, as it is likely that it will soon be proposed to add to the strength of the Commission? I have been studying the Catalogue of Phillipps' Manuscripts. It is a most meagre affair, but gives hints of things preserved there which would be of extreme interest to me. You say it costs a pound a day to search. How many Manuscripts would they let me see for that amount, and is there any restriction about copying?”

“ I wish the Museum had the custody of the Manuscripts; antiquarians and historians can ill afford the heavy outlay in fees and travelling expenses for a very uncertain result.”

*From Rev. C. P. Meehan, Author of "The Flight of the Earls," etc.*

"MON BON AMI,

"Accept my grateful thanks for your goodness in mentioning me in the preface, which I will read *con amore* on to-morrow when Duffy leaves for London.

"I hope you will not forget a portrait of Preston in Bellings, about which we shall have a talk next time I have the pleasure of meeting you.

"Best respects to mademoiselle, and repeated assurance of my gratitude."

*From James Emerson Scott, then Editor of the "Irish Times," Dublin.*

"I am amazed at your industry! Irish history, when it is really written, will owe to you a vast deal. In these angry times we cannot expect an audience, except among a very few, for anything calm and sensible, but I suppose the reaction to be not very far off."

*From Lord de Vesci.*

"Viceregal Lodge, Dublin, December 14.

"I am very glad to see the true version of the dispute between de Vesci and Kildare. It is a satisfaction to have the aspersions on his courage cleared up. I fear, though, that there is somewhat of a hiatus in my pedigree, though there can be no doubt that I am descended from William de Vesci."

On June 28, 1880, Rev. James M'Swiney, S.J., writes from Manresa House, Roehampton—

"At the desire of Lord Bute I would beg you to be so good as to inform me of how much more remains of the 'Liber Hymnorum' for publication? Is there any immediate

prospect of its continuance? If not, what is the obstacle? It is not impossible that his lordship would smooth down *one* obstacle (if it be the only one) to a resumption of the publication. What he has seen of it makes him wish for more."

These years were a happy period in the life of the brother and sister at Villa Nova, who had recovered much of their bright spirits, yet were mindful of the shadows of the past, and of those who had parted from them under those shadows.

"I dream of them at night," writes Mary Gilbert to MacCarthy, "and think all are now gone before me, except J. T.; and I often say, 'When will the others come, when shall we join those loved ones?'" She condoles with the poet on the recent loss of one of his children. "The New Year opens sadly for you under the cloud of a great grief. So many of the young and bright are carried away. The last was the beautiful Chrissie Dillon,<sup>1</sup> such a lovely creature, in her nineteenth year. I said on Sunday to old Mrs. Madden, 'All the young and good are going out of the world, and only a few old people will be left;' and she said, 'Yes, my dear, that *they* may grow more perfect.'" But in the same letter Mary gives pleasant news. "J. T. is full of life and the interest of his work, and he *does* work, and enjoy it so! I am turning politician and reading the debates in Parliament, or listening to them when read by J. T. He had a pleasant day on Monday, when he escorted Lady Cowper through the Royal Irish Academy, and explained its treasures to her and the beautiful Lady de Vesci and Lady Leslie. He was driven with them afterwards to the Viceregal Lodge, to lunch with them and His Excellency. He says that Lady Cowper is very clever and intellectual. If any one talks of disturbance in Ireland, will you tell them everything is quiet here? Lady Wilde thought we were all going about with revolvers!"

In another letter (March, 1880) she writes—

"J. T. is as busy as a bee. His new book on the Irish War of 1641 has been a great success. He gets pleasing

<sup>1</sup> Only sister of Mr. John Dillon, M.P.

letters from all quarters of the globe about it. He was very much grieved at the loss of dear good Dr. Russell. There is an article in the *Saturday Review*<sup>1</sup> on him; not very flattering to the Irish priests in general." Again, "J. T. was greatly pleased to hear that you like his work on the 'Aphorismical Discovery.' He gets great numbers of letters about it from people who are very enthusiastic on the subject. Did you see an article in the *Edinburgh Review* about Catholic rule in Ireland, in which his book is spoken of?"

In March, 1881, she writes—

"We have been busy here lately with distinguished visitors, French savants who have visited Dublin. M. D'Arbois de Joubainville, a great Celtic scholar, who holds a post from the French Government, has been here for five weeks, and M. Bertrand and his wife arrived on Friday last. M. Bertrand is curator of the Gallo-Roman Museum, and lives in the Palais de St. Germain in Paris. His wife is very pleasant, and speaks English pretty well. We are to meet them at Dr. Banks' to-day. They all dined with us on Sunday. J. T. thinks very highly of them, and it is pleasant to meet them. They go home this week, but M. D'Arbois de Joubainville will remain longer."

In May of the same year she writes to Mr. John MacCarthy—

"Aubrey de Vere dined with us on Tuesday last. He is very agreeable. He seemed never to have heard of your father's beautiful ode on the Centenary of Calderon. I am writing to Lady Wilde to-day, but am too selfish to part with our copy, as it is the only one anywhere! What a pity it is not made more generally known. Why do you not appear at some of Lady Wilde's Saturday receptions? She says her rooms are always full of poets, painters, and 'æsthetics,' and

<sup>1</sup> Over the signature "A Catholic Layman," Judge O'Hagan published, in the *Spectator* of March 20, 1880, a long and able letter in answer to an article regarding Dr. Russell, which had appeared in the *Saturday Review* of March 6. The *Saturday Review*, while giving high praise to Dr. Russell, made, personally, insinuations as to his private sentiments, and his relations with the authorities of the Church, for which "A Catholic Layman" showed there was not the slightest foundation.

the Irish, who fall upon her neck and weep. I don't think it will be necessary for you to perform that operation. What about the Spanish works? You ought to try to have them bought by the National Library here." Again, "We dined at Bray on Tuesday to meet Father Healy, who told some good stories. Some witty things were said. J. T. goes next week to London. A letter from the Marchioness of Ormonde this morning kindly insists on his staying at Park Lane all the time."

## CHAPTER XV

1881-1885

Boswell's "Life of Johnson"—Charles O'Connor—Dr. S. R. Gardiner—  
Letters.

THE following letters, selected from a mass of correspondence of the years 1881 to 1885, faintly reflect the various works in which Gilbert was engaged, and suggest the hearty spirit of *camaraderie* existing between men working with enthusiasm and persistence on historical and archæological lines connected more or less with Ireland.

*From the Rev. Alexander Napier.*

"Holkham Vicarage, Wells, Norfolk,  
"October 20, 1881.

"Some time ago Mr. Reid announced to me that you possessed and would communicate to me material (unpublished) concerning Johnson's correspondence with Charles O'Connor. My labours of this very day bring me to the second letter in Boswell's 'Life of Johnson' to O'Connor, and I am reminded of your kind and obliging attention. May I venture to beg you to forward me what you possess at the earliest opportunity? It will be a great kindness and also a great help to this new edition of Boswell's work now passing through the press. I will stop the press till I hear from you.

"Do you know anything of William Campbell? Can you refer me to any source or sources of information regarding him? I possess a copy—rare indeed—of the journal



he kept of his visits to Johnson in London ; but more should be said, and more be known of Campbell. Chancellor of St. Macartin's he is called. Does that dignity subsist at this day ?

“And now let me ask after the health and well-being of the Nuncio's Memoirs, which, by Lord Leicester's orders, I sent you. Not that you are to regard this as a hint that we are impatient to see the Nuncio again ; not so. I ask only whether the Memoirs proved valuable on further examination. I always suspected that Carte had made but a superficial use of them. I hope they are found to throw light on a very mysterious subject, the history of Ireland about the year 1640. Pray excuse the abruptness of my request, and lay it to the account of the exigencies of an editor.”

*From the Same.*

“April 13, 1883.

“In your report (Historical Manuscripts Commission) you give the letters to and from Charles O'Conor up to 1769 ; but you hold out a hope that you will return to the O'Conor correspondence subsequently to 1769 at no very long interval. There is a certain letter from Johnson to O'Conor, May 19, 1777 ; twenty years subsequent, therefore, to Johnson's earlier letter to O'Conor, April 9, 1757, which I much desire to know whether you have come on among the O'Conor papers. In it there is a passage to this effect, ‘Dr. Leland begins the history too late ; the ages which deserve an exact inquiry are those times (for such there were) when Ireland was the school of the West, the quiet habitation of sanctity and literature’—an opinion which, from other sources, we know to have been Johnson's settled conviction. Well ! Croker must needs put in his ugly hand, and proposes to read, instead of the words I have above underlined, ‘*if such there were,*’ which even the context refutes. But if you could lay your hand on the letter among the O'Conor papers, it would

be very agreeable to confute Croker in this manner. You will find the second letter of Johnson to O'Connor in Croker's edition of Boswell. I hope you will not consider this as involving too much trouble."

*From the Same.*

"July 6, 1883.

"The box arrived this afternoon. I lost no time in unpacking it, and found the contents most carefully packed. I have already placed the volumes on the shelves, and have announced to Lord Leicester that the Nuncio's Memoirs have been returned, and that not a scratch is to be traced on any of the volumes, either inside or outside. You may count on my advocacy of any proposal for publication. How I wish you had been able to come here. A visit would have been potent for your special purpose."

*From the Same.*

"August 14, 1883.

"It was a great disappointment and vexation not to see you at my vicarage. I could have shown you your sumptuous folios in a very distinguished place in the library at Holkham. Well, let us hope that another year will be more propitious.

"Now for Johnson and Charles O'Connor again! If we had met, in two minutes I would have been able to make my wants quite clear to you.

"I have been all round the compass in search of these letters of Johnson. I have been referred to this collection and that collection, but always vainly, because my good friends would not observe what I wanted. In Boswell's 'Life' are two letters from Johnson to Charles O'Connor; the first dated April 9, 1757, the second May 19, 1777—as nearly as possible twenty years between them. I don't think that

Boswell had the originals in his possession; the originals belonged to Mr. Joseph Cooper Walker, of the ‘Treasury, Dublin.’ This gentleman was a man of literary attainments, and died in 1810. These letters, then, if in existence, will be found in the papers of that gentleman, if he left any. Hence I think the Probate Court of Dublin should first be searched to discover whether he died intestate. If he left a will, no doubt he bequeathed his papers, letters, etc., to some person or to some institution. Now, this is the point of departure. I wish this examined, and I will not turn aside to any vague source of information. Can you kindly help me here? It would be a great help to me and a service done to literature, for according to the reading of a short parenthesis in the second letter of Johnson to O’Conor, ‘If such there were,’ ‘For such there were,’ a good deal depends. A minute’s inspection of the second letter,<sup>1</sup> May 19, 1777, would suffice to settle all doubts. I fear I am giving you some trouble, but you will bear with my over-anxiety to settle a point which has occasioned no little stir among editors.”

*From the Same.*

‘August 26, 1884.

“The noble volume has arrived. It is already in the place destined for it, *i.e.* on the shelf along with the other stately folios of the same work. As soon as Lord Leicester returns from the Highlands, the volume, with your letter, will be shown to him.

“Your commendation of the ‘Boswell’ is very pleasing to me, as it ought to be, coming from one who knows what a good book is. The editing of that really great book has been a sincere pleasure to me. I wish it were all to be done over again!”

<sup>1</sup> “Mr. J. T. Gilbert, who reported on the O’Conor papers for the Historical Manuscripts Commission, can give no account of it. He thinks that it may have been sent to Boswell.”—Napier’s “Boswell’s Johnson,” vol. ii., 1884, p. 569.

*From Richard Nugent.*

“3, Coleshill Street, Eaton Square, London,

“April 13, 1882.

“I am extremely obliged by your letter asking me if there were any matters of special interest which I would wish included in the notice of Christopher Lord Delvin in the forthcoming volume of the National Manuscripts of Ireland, which you are editing for the Government.

“There are many matters of very great interest concerning Lord Delvin and his brother William which are most worthy of notice, and have never yet seen the light. I possess a very large collection of letters and papers concerning them, and which, I hope, some day, if my life is spared, to embody in my family history. There are two or three letters (one holograph, the other autograph) of his which are of very special interest, and the letter from Lady Delvin to Sir Robert Cecil, on her aged husband's imprisonment in 1602, is a most touching one. If you wish, I will gladly give you copies of these, and give you some notes on incidents in his singularly chequered career. There is, in fact, hardly any career in Irish history more interesting and more chequered, or so little known. He was a very learned and accomplished man, educated in Cambridge, and entering on the duties of his rank when he came of age. He had many ups and downs; at one time in the highest favour, at another time arrested for high treason; restored then to favour, and again arrested and imprisoned in the Tower. Once more released and loaded with grants and favours, he was for the third time arrested and imprisoned in his old age in Dublin Castle, where he died, leaving his widow, Lady Mary Fitzgerald, daughter of Gerald, eleventh Earl of Kildare, and many children, to mourn his loss. His eldest son Richard was imprisoned in Dublin Castle for complicity with the Tyrone conspiracy in 1607. Thence he escaped, and, after a while, threw himself at the feet of his sovereign; was restored to favour and fortune, was created

Earl of Westmeath, and was the most popular man in the country, being the advocate of all popular measures ; so that the Irish would at one time have taken him by force and made him king, whilst such is the changeability of the *vox populi*, that they murdered their idol in 1641 !”

*From the Same.*

“With reference to your query, I cannot say that I have met any references to Lord Delvin’s work on the Irish language presented to Queen Elizabeth. As a matter of fact, I know that what purports to be the original manuscript of this work is in the possession of Mr. Shirley of Lough Fea. I have not myself seen it, so cannot tell whether it is in Lord Delvin’s hand or not.”

*From the Same.*

“July 18, 1882.

“In reference to Lord Delvin’s expression in his letter of September, 1591, of his ‘late unfortunate troubles,’ I think there should be a preceding paragraph saying what these were, viz. his arrest, removal to England, and confinement in the Tower with Gerald, Earl of Kildare, for presumed complicity with the Baltinglass rebellion. Should you wish to have the exact particulars, I will most gladly supply them to you from my own transcripts and papers.

“In the ‘Obits, marriages, etc., of some of the principal families in Ireland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,’ preserved in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, there are two entries concerning Lord Delvin. (1) ‘Christopher Nugent, mil. Baron of Delvin, ob. in Castro Dub. ex abscessu.’ This is specially interesting, as it explains some paragraphs in Lady Delvin’s affecting letter on his imprisonment. (2) ‘Christopher Nugent, Baron of Delvin, ob. 5 Sept., 1602, prisoner in Dublin Castle.’

“As you have so kindly made mention of my name, I should like to be more particularly identified as the head and representative of the Farren Connell, county of Cavan branch of the Nugent family. Except the present Earl of Westmeath’s branch, I am, so far as I know, head of the senior branch of the family now existing.

“Accept my cordial thanks for your exceedingly interesting memoir of Lord Delvin.”

*From the Same.*

“July 24, 1882.

“Many thanks for your letter. I have much pleasure in sending you papers on Lord Delvin’s imprisonment in 1580, first in Dublin Castle, and then his transmission to England as a prisoner.

“By Order in Council, dated Greenwich, June 10, 1582, the Lieutenant of the Tower was directed to receive him with Lord Kildare into his custody, to place them apart in several lodgings where they may not have conference with each other, nor any with them, but such as their lordships shall appoint, and to remain close prisoners, each to have a servant to attend upon him. I have not discovered in the Council Register any order for their release, but there is a letter extant from Lord Delvin dated Greenwich, October 29, 1583, when, I presumed, he was discharged from the Tower but retained a prisoner on parole in England.

“I have all the papers extant in this country about Robert Nugent, the Jesuit, but there are valuable papers about him in the Vatican, also interesting particulars in Lynch’s ‘Cambrensis Eversus,’ also in his ‘Alithinologia et Supplementum,’ and in O’Conor’s ‘Historical Address,’ as to his dealings with Rinuccini, etc. I have also some most interesting papers on Chief Justice Nugent. Do you want them?”

*From Rev. J. Graves.*

“ 1881.

“ The Association<sup>1</sup> has suffered much from the cause you mention, several members having withdrawn and a great number being in arrears with their subscriptions. There seems also a general paralysis of the workers. Dean Reeves is doing nothing, Hennessy is doing nothing. I know not of any matter relative to the Confederation and the war of 1641 which you are not better acquainted with, the papers at Kilkenny Castle, and the Carte Papers at Oxford. If the discovery of the books of the Confederates, which were in the possession of the Cromwellians, and which seem to have been in evidence much later, could be hoped for, it would be a great thing, but I fear they are irretrievably lost. What a strange thing the loss of the Distribution Books, *i.e.* the contemporary copies of those now partially preserved in the Public Record Office, was. My father made extracts from them, and I have the extracts. They were abstracted by some one between 1830 and 1848. When I first had access to the Ormonde muniments in 1849, they were gone. I have a strong suspicion they exist in the United States, if at all.”

*From J. T. Gilbert to Edward Edwards.*

“ Villa Nova, Blackrock, Co. Dublin,

“ January 12, 1881.

“ Many thanks for your kind note and extract. Some time since I had copies made of all the letters from and to Bellings which appeared in the Bodleian lists. It is, however, not improbable that some may have been overlooked. There are also, no doubt, references to him in letters of other persons among the Carte Papers, which may turn up in calendaring. I have succeeded in getting together a good many particulars in connection with his career, of which very

<sup>1</sup> Kilkenny Archæological Society.

little has been hitherto known. I am engaged on an edition of the history of Ireland in his time, the manuscript of which, I think I mentioned to you, has been discovered by me. This I intend to illustrate with original documents on the same system as the 'Contemporary History of Affairs in Ireland, 1641-1642,' with which you are acquainted. I propose to make it as far as possible a history of the Irish Confederation, of which little is accurately known at present. With this object in view, I have also had all the documents and letters in the Bodleian lists, written by, to, or in connection with the 'Confederation,' copied. But here again it is possible that some may have been overlooked."

*From Dr. S. R. Gardiner.*

"5, Magdalen Street, Oxford,

"January 9, 1881.

"I have been living in the Ireland of 1641-2 during the last week, and a very unpleasant country it is to be in. Yesterday I read a letter of Conway's, calmly stating that Monro's Scots had marched into Antrim and found *no* enemy, but had killed about 40 men and 500 or 600 women and children, who were looking after the cows! I don't think Prendergast got hold of anything so bad as that!

"I shall be going home to-morrow. Can you tell me whether any light is thrown by Bellings' narrative on Ormond's connection with a scheme for an insurrection? I find his name and Antrim's mentioned in that connection in a sworn examination of an Englishman who escaped from Cavan, as being in the mouths of the natives at the time of the rebellion, but the natives seem to have believed such incredible things that this is no evidence.

"Will Bellings, or the beginning of him, be accessible soon? I have nearly finished my English story, and should like to work up my Irish materials, whilst so much is fresh, but do not like to begin till I get sight of Bellings' story."



*From Rev. H. O. Coxe, Librarian, Bodleian  
Library.*

“Oxford, January 19, 1881.

“I have received your cheque, spite of the snow, in all safety (£5). Many thanks in the widow’s name and my own. Yes, we have got together a very good sum of money (£500), to which the Royal Literary Fund have very generously added £120. I am *so* glad Her Majesty’s Government has appointed the right man in the right place to succeed the dear old Maynooth president. It is not often that the very fittest man for a post is selected. Talking of which, is Parnell the best man for your first Protector?”

*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

“The Library, Armagh,

“February 26, 1881.

“In 1811 Brian Maguire, of Tempo, the duellist, printed a little volume of his memoirs with his family pedigree, but the work was suppressed. It was not, however, extinguished, for O’Donovan saw, and drew from a copy of it. Can you tell me of any copy which is accessible to an investigator, that is, myself? Did you ever see a copy of Piranesi’s ‘Antiquities of Rome’ (4 volumes, folio, 1756), with the engraver’s Dedication to Viscount Charlemont? Further, is there a copy in Dublin of the very rare quarto he printed for private distribution (Roma, 1757) in reference to his quarrel with Milord, and the substitution of a new, instead of the intended, Dedication? My parishioner, Sir James Stronge, has a copy of the ‘Antiquities’ with the uncanceled Dedication, and I suspect there are extremely few possessors of such in the three kingdoms. I am afraid the place we visited at Grange is not the true site of O’Neill’s great battle.”

*From Hans C. Hamilton.*

“Public Record Office, London,

“March 15, 1881.

“On referring to Map, vol. i., No. 19, I find that the enigmatical name Lonytlouth is situated just where the town of Louth now stands. Of course, rivers meander, and our map has rectified or straightened its rivers; but, then, we allow for that.

“I see in ‘A New Gazetteer of the British Isles,’ by James A. Sharp, London, 1852, that Louth is a parish 7 miles S.S.W. Dundalk, on river Glyde; was called Knockfergus and Cluain Laoin, and had St. Patrick’s monastery founded for St. Moeten’s, who died 19th August, 534. Seward says 100 bishops and 300 presbyters were educated in this school. Now, Cluain is plain, or lawn. But whether Laoin has anything to do with the hymns (for Laoi means a hymn or poem) or sacred songs sung from age to age by the 100 bishops and 300 presbyters who were educated at the school there I cannot say; but this I can say, that the name is clear enough Lonytlouth, and that it means Louth. If Dr. O’Donovan were with us still, he would doubtless know. I do not know what the figures on the map refer to. The figures, especially the 3’s, are peculiar. I have seen such 3’s as dates endorsed on State Papers. I fancy they were written by one employed about Burghly as servant, that is gentleman, that is clerk. But I think I have seen some auditors’ accounts with them. As for the name of Belfast, it is, no doubt, in the old form, and I may add also, although our map has a somewhat rectified boundary for its lough, still, in other like maps Belfast in its modern form occurs just in the spot where this does.”

*From Richard O’Flynn.*

“Worcester, Mass., United States.

“Will you send me three copies of the ‘Contemporary History of Affairs in Ireland’? I would also like to own copies of the ‘Facsimiles of the Ancient Irish Manuscripts,’

just to show my Puritan friends that our land was equal to any other in the past. It is now thirty-one years since I left dear old Erin. I have not forgotten her, nor am I entirely ignorant of what is passing there. I receive the *Dublin Nation* regularly from Louisburgh, Co. Mayo. I came from Waterford county. I am somewhat acquainted with you, having copies of your 'Viceroy's,' 'Streets of Dublin,' etc. This you may call a curious acquaintance, but somehow I feel a love for every man who labours to rescue the past history of our unhappy land. I felt angry and mortified when I saw the account of the work of transcription or revision of Irish manuscripts entrusted to a stranger to the land and language, as I understood it, some two years ago. I would like to get some old document fit for framing, if possible, as early as the Norman invasion of Ireland, with date plain, if possible written on one side, for which I should pay a fair price. I am aware you have unusual facilities, and may have duplicates. I had the pleasure of an introduction to Mr. Parnell in Boston, and was very favourably impressed with the man. He looks and acts an honest, sincere, cool, firm man. His reception in America is all he could possibly desire—overflowing houses, sympathy, and aid. If I can be of any service to you in obtaining anything in the book line, you may command my services, or, in fact, anything else you may need."

*From Rev. James Mc Swiney, S. J.*

"Manresa House, Roehampton.

"I have forwarded your book to the Marquis of Bute. Wishing you every success in your truly national undertaking, I will just add that Lord Bute is working at the 'Scottish Saints' with a will, has printed the 'Altus' of St. Colum-Cille, and talks of publishing the 'Codex Salmanticensis.' A German savant is bringing out a vocabulary of all the words, Gaelic, etc., occurring in Ebel's edition of Zeuss's 'Grammatica Celtica.' Wishing you 'proleptically,' as those German fellows have it, the blessings of the approaching

holy season, *i.e.* if you are not spirited away by a *lettre de cachet*."

*From Rev. C. E. Tisdall, D.D.*

"22, Herbert Place, Dublin,  
"November 24, 1881.

"DEAR JOHN GILBERT,

"Will you kindly send me whatever information you have as regards the visit of Henry V. to this land of ours? I am anxious to have as much as can be obtained, as I wish to write a short introduction to my readings from the play of that name by one William Shakspeare. I hope that your sister is better. Kindly tell her I inquired for her.

"Ever sincerely yours,

"C. E. TISDALL."

*From Dr. S. R. Gardiner.*

"Bromley, Kent, November 29, 1881.

"How very kind you are! The book will be of the utmost value to me in my next volume. The present ones drop Irish history about April, 1642. I am not writing Irish history but English, and therefore must cut short a good deal that would be of interest to you, and must be lucky if I escape gross blunders. If you find any, I shall be much pleased if you will take the trouble to point them out. As I have not got to Owen Roe O'Neill, I have not yet got into the thick of the 'Aphorismical Discovery,' but you will find one or two references to it. In the next volumes I hope to use both your books, and the preface to volume iii. will be the proper place to speak of them. I have already written a note to the *Academy*, and hope it may reach the office in time for this week's issue."

*From Richard Caulfield, LL.D.*

"Cork, December, 1881.

"I found out a great deal from time to time about the Algerine invasions on our coast, particularly about Lemcon.

I have no doubt the gentry, and in particular Sir William Hall, were in league with them, and helped to plunder many a ship on the coast at the time. I printed an account of the Sack of Baltimore, the most important of all the raids of the pirates on the southern shore; you will find it in the Kinsale book, 'Annals,' p. xxxiii. I found the original account, as sent from Baltimore at the time, in the Public Record Office, London. It completely does away with the beautiful account given by Davis in his 'Sack of Baltimore,' 'O'Driscoll's Daughter,' and so forth. I fully agree with you in your account of the Depositions, 1641, in Trinity College, Dublin (8th Report, Public Records). I would be glad to have the Cork part, and would probably print it in a forthcoming work."

*From Sir Bernard Burke.*

"Dublin Castle, December 31, 1881.

"The Princess Louise, who is interesting herself about the approaching Berlin Heraldic Exhibition, asks me as to Ireland. What do you think? Putting aside R.I.A., Trinity College, Ulster's Office, etc., which could not part with any of their treasures, do you know of any private sources from which Her Royal Highness might draw for contributions? You are so conversant with the collections throughout Ireland, that I am sure you can assist us. Your first volume reached me some time since, and delighted me. Whatever you do you do admirably."

*From Lord Talbot de Malahide.*

"I am trying to get at the history of Miles Corbet. Can you tell me whether there is any book which gives the biography and antecedents of the Regicides? There is another subject which interests me—I am anxious to know about the introduction of saffron into Ireland. Can you refer me to any book on the subject? Saffron cakes are

an old institution in Dublin, so I suppose it was cultivated there at some time. The climate would suit it. I suppose the dresses of the gallow-glasses were dyed with saffron. I never heard of saffron cakes in England. Can you tell me where they are to be found? Saffron Waldon in this county, I suppose, was named from it. I remember, myself, when at the University of Cambridge, seeing a field of saffron at Cottenham, in that county, in full blossom."

*From Rev. J. Graves.*

"Inisnag Glebe, Stoneyford, February 10, 1882.

"It is a great pity that the 'White Book of Ossory,' from which were copied several items, seems to have been lost about 1730 or 1740. Query: Are these transcripts from it in Marsh's Library?"

*From William C. Borlase, M.P.*

"House of Commons, London, March 31, 1882.

"You must not think I have been unmindful of your desire to gain information of Sir J. Borlase. I have a good many references to him in papers which I have collected and which are now in London, whither I have had them forwarded, and they are open to your inspection at any time. As he is a collateral ancestor of mine, I am as anxious as you can be that a full and accurate account of him should be given. I have his will, and his place in the family pedigree I have ascertained with certainty. Of course, he must not be confused with Sir J. Borlase, junior, whose place in the pedigree I can also show you. You know the mention of him in the Record Office publications, in Borlase's 'Ireland' (both works), in Bankes's 'History of Corfe Castle,' and in the Historical Manuscripts Commission. There is a picture of him at Winchester, if I remember right, as a boy, where he must have been a gentleman commoner; it is in the second master's dining-room. There is another (a

Vandyck) at Kingston Lacy (Mrs. Bankes's), and, I fancy, Lord Portsmouth, who is a descendant of his, has a third. In the Historical Manuscripts volumes there is a curious account of his widow's effects being seized in France on her death, as an alien in that country. Mrs. Bankes's picture was photographed for me, and I will send you one when I get home to Cornwall next Wednesday. I am collecting materials for the history of my family, which is a very ancient and curious one, and any help which you can give me I shall thankfully receive. Similarly, you shall have full access to such papers as I have. I bought your most interesting 'Aphorismical Discovery' because it contained notices of him. Who was Sir *Edward* Borlase, a witness at Maguire's trial? He had, I think, a brother called Edward, and his great-great-grandfather was so called. It was a name in the family."

*From J. T. Gilbert to Edward Edwards.*

"Villa Nova, Blackrock, Co. Dublin,

"August 18, 1882.

"Many thanks for your kind note and memoranda. You will further oblige me by letting Mr. Parker have the references to the paper of Ignatius White, in which R. Bellings is spoken of in connection with the account of T. Scot, the regicide. I am sorry to hear that you have had trouble as to the final letter of Bellings' name."

*From Edward Edwards.*

"Seaview, Niton, Isle of Wight,

"September 13, 1882.

"But for the fact that I have had a very unusually long spell of work, unbroken by *any* real holiday, at Bodley (namely, from October, 1881, until September, 1882), I should not have left Oxford for my much-needed vacation without having first copied out for you—and with real

pleasure to be of some slight subservienc<sup>d</sup> to your admirable labours for Irish history—the extracts I mentioned in a former letter from that place concerning Richard Bellings. Since I wrote I have met with two others; *all* are of small moment, but, cumulatively, may have some slight value.

“Mr. George Parker offered to copy them, but I was reluctant to part with the pleasure of having my interest in your labours, in however humble a way.

“I assume that you are interested in both the ‘Richard Bellings’—he of the Confederacy, and his son of the Diplomatic missions on the Continent under Charles II.”

About this time Gilbert made an effort to secure for Dublin a valuable treasure of manuscripts connected with Ireland, by the purchase of a portion of the important collection of Lord Ashburnham, and wrote to the authorities as follows:—

*From J. T. Gilbert.*

“Villa Nova, Blackrock, Co. Dublin,

“February 24, 1883.

“May I ask you to be good enough to bring under His Excellency’s notice a statement which appears in the *London Athenæum* of this day that hopes are entertained that the Treasury will sanction the purchase of Lord Ashburnham’s collection of manuscripts for the British Museum.

“His Excellency is no doubt aware that a portion of this collection is specially connected with Ireland, and might, with much advantage to Ireland, be placed in Dublin, the remainder going to the British Museum.

“Perhaps His Excellency may think well of taking this matter into his consideration, as it is one in which the educated public would be much interested. I take the liberty of adding that from my present acquaintance with the heads of the British Museum Department of Manuscripts, I should not anticipate any obstacles from them in relation to the



special Irish portions of the collection. I shall be happy to afford any further information on the subject that may be desired."

As a result of this application (the Ashburnham Manuscripts having been purchased by Government), the Irish Manuscripts of the collection were deposited in the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.

*From Rev. J. Graves.*

"Stoneyford, June 27, 1883.

"I do wish, with you, that J. P. Prendergast would not rest on his oars. I know he contemplated a history of the Act of Settlement, and of that period, and has ample materials for it. Dean Reeves, I fear much, will not give us the 'Book of Armagh,' but why not who can say? Truly, as you say, there is some fatality over anything that relates to the printing of Irish historical matter. The opportunities and means are not wanting; it seems to rest with the workers themselves. I cannot understand W. H. Hennessy holding back the 'Bruden.' It seems inexplicable. He says he has it all ready, and that five weeks would see it done, but why it is not done is the mystery."

*From Dr. MacColl.*

"*Athenæum* Office, London, August, 1883.

"The two handsome volumes you so kindly sent I found on the table when I came in from the country this morning. I shall read them with much interest. It must have cost you a small fortune to bring them out in such handsome style. I can give you a column and half for the review of the 'Analecta.' Could you kindly let me have the review of the book I sent you, 'Ireland in the 17th Century,' by Miss Hickson?"

*From Sir Horace Rumbold.*

“British Legation, Stockholm,

“August 17, 1883.

“DEAR SIR,

“I take the liberty of addressing you on the subject of a letter from Henry Rumbold to Lord Arlington, date of February, 1683. You were good enough to promise Mr. Kingston that you would endeavour to procure a transcript of the document for me, and I venture to remind you of the kind offer on your part. I am reconstructing the history of this Henry Rumbold and his belongings, in whom I have a family interest. I have seen a great many letters of his, but none of so late a date as 1683, and am very desirous to know the contents of this one, in the hope that it may throw some light on the late history of the man.

“Dear sir,

“Yours faithfully,

“HORACE RUMBOLD,

“H.M. Envoy Extraordinary and Minister  
Plenipotentiary to the King of Sweden.”

Having much at heart the publication of the ‘Register of the Abbey of St. Thomas, Dublin,’ to follow as companion to that of the ‘Chartularies of St. Mary’s Abbey, Dublin,’ already issued by Government in the series described as ‘Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland’ (Master of the Rolls’ Series), Gilbert addressed the following letter to John Cashel Hoey on the subject:—

*From J. T. Gilbert to John Cashel Hoey.*

“December 3, 1883.

“I should be glad to know if you are likely soon to have an opportunity of communicating with the Chancellor of the Exchequer or his representative as to a matter in which I

think you would be interested. It is in reference to the continuance of the small grant of £160, annually, included hitherto in the Estimates for the publication of manuscripts connected with Ireland. The 'National Manuscripts' being now just finished, the Master of the Rolls in Ireland has recommended in succession to them, the publication, under my editorship, of some unique manuscripts of great interest. His Honour has, however, received an official intimation that the grant of £160, will only be given to clear off the arrears for the work already done. This appears strange, more especially as ten times the amount is regularly allotted every year for Scotch publications of analogous character. On looking at the Estimates, you will see that every year there is a grant of £600, for the Historical Department at Edinburgh, and £1000, for editing documents relating to Scotland. The votes have been taken without opposition for many years past for these amounts. These matters will lead to discussion in Parliament, and probably the Chancellor of the Exchequer has no information whatever on the subject. Perhaps you may see your way to making some communication to Mr. Childers. There is still sufficient time to have the proposed publication approved of, and provision made for it in the Estimates now being revised by the Treasury."

*From J. T. Gilbert to Leopold Guibara.*

"Villa Nova, Blackrock, November 17, 1883.

"Do you happen to know any one who is acquainted with the heads of the Cistercian Order in England? If so, I should be very much obliged by a few lines of introduction in connection with an inquiry which I am anxious to make concerning some old manuscripts relating to the Order. I am printing documents of the Cistercians in Ireland in early times. At present the Order has no Irish house, and I have reason to believe that some such manuscripts as I am in quest of may be found in their houses in England."

*From Rev. Reginald Walsh, O.P.*

“St. Mary’s, Tallaght, February 26.

“It may be important to know that we have here the flag of the Confederation carried in procession before Rinuccini. It was preserved in the Black Abbey, Kilkenny, till a few years ago, when it was sent to Tallaght. It is of green silk, and bears a painting of the Queen of the Rosary. If at any time you wish to see it, or to have it photographed we shall be most happy. It is of national interest.”

*From Dr. S. R. Gardiner.*

“South View, Widmore Road, Bromley, Kent,  
“November 9, 1884.

“I have been working with your ‘History of the Confederation,’ and have got my sketch finished up to the Cessation. Are there any more volumes coming?

“A point on which I want help perhaps you may give me some assistance on. I can make out, from the Treaty of Cessation, the lands respectively held by the two parties in Leinster and Munster, but not in Connaught and Ulster. Is there any way of making these out?

“The connection between the Irish history of 1643 and the English is very close, and ought to be brought out in any story of the English Civil War.”

*From J. T. Gilbert to Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

“Villa Nova, Blackrock, Co. Dublin, April 12, 1884.

“MY DEAR REEVES,

“I have examined the Haliday and the Academy’s collection of pamphlets, but as they do not contain any copy of either the ‘Life of Skelton’ or the ‘Vindication,’ I quite agree with you in deploring the neglect of such matters in the Library in Dublin. Since Government appointed me one of its trustees for the National Library (formerly Royal

Dublin Society), I have succeeded in having some valuable additions made there in the historical line, especially of high-priced books. If there are any important works not already there, which you think ought to be procured, I would be very glad to have a note of them with a view to having them obtained.

“I suppose the reprint of the ‘Life of Skelton’ is the one prefixed to the edition of his ‘Discourses,’ printed at London in 1824; but in it there is no reference to the ‘Vindication.’ A unique collection of broadsides, tracts, and pamphlets printed at Dublin in folio, 4to, 8vo, and 12mo, from 1650 to 1798, extending to above one hundred volumes, was lately offered to Trinity College for £63. The collection was begun by old Dr. Worth in the seventeenth century, and continued by his collateral descendants, the Newenhams. Our friends in T.C.D. did not seem to appreciate the collection, and declined it. I heard of the matter by accident, and, having looked over the collection, purchased it at once for my own library, and so kept it in Ireland. It contains some very great varieties, including Cromwellian papers which Prendergast never saw before.<sup>1</sup>

“I should be greatly obliged for any particulars in relation to the Church of St. Ultan in Cuillifan, referred to in the Mary’s Abbey printed volume at pp. 39, 41, 149, 153, 161. It does not appear under the above name in the ordinary authorities.

“Yours very sincerely,  
“JOHN T. GILBERT.”

*From Dr. S. R. Gardiner.*

“South View, Widmore Road, Bromley, Kent,  
“May 12, 1884.

“MY DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“I shall be very glad to hear anything you can tell me about the Plunket Manuscript.

“I had been thinking of writing to you to ask you if you

<sup>1</sup> Now in possession of the Corporation of Dublin.

knew of a batch of Ormond papers in the Forster Collection of the South Kensington Museum. They were known to me some years ago, but as they related to the reign of Queen Anne, I did not take any interest in them, and cannot remember whether they were originals or copies.

“Believe me,

“Yours sincerely,

“SAMUEL R. GARDINER.”

On the flyleaf of this letter a note is found in Gilbert's handwriting: “If the Plunket Manuscript is the volume which is noticed in the second Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1871, pp. 227-231—if so, it is imperfect, and the greater part of it composed of matter not worth printing; such as extracts from printed ‘History of Ireland,’ by Cox, Nelson's Collection, and Sir Roger L'Estrange's publication.

“The earlier part of the manuscript has been lost, and what remains was compiled long after the events to which it refers. Carte fell into some curious errors in relation to this manuscript. See also ‘Contemporary History of Affairs in Ireland,’ 1641-1652 (1880), vol iii., preface, p. 21, note.”

*From R. D. Lyons, M.D., M.P.*

“8, Merrion Square, West, Dublin.

“MY DEAR GILBERT,

“Was there anything in the Grants of Henry II. and his successors, to the Norman Lords, to define the terms and conditions of those who were to hold under them as tenants? In the Grants of the Seignories under Elizabeth, and in the Plantations of James there were conditions as to number and nature of the holdings.

“Could you put your hands on any extracts that would show these limitations and protections in a clear way? I have it in my head, and want to show it in the House, that the Grantees were never given the lands absolutely and unconditionally to do what they liked with, as is now alleged.

“Have you any idea of the true origin of the Tenant Right of Ulster?”

“Ever yours,

“R. D. LYONS.”

*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

“The Library, Armagh, August 19, 1884.

“Part 2 of volume iv. has come safely to hand, put up between two boards, so as to preserve the integrity of the grand volume as perfectly as the repose of a well-grouted shelf. For this, as for its predecessor, I am bound to thank and bless you. These five tomes, with the three of Scotland which were sent me, form a grand file on my grenadier shelf. I wish you could get leave to bring out a volume of ‘Hibernia Peregrina,’ and give us all the Continental specimens, which are quite numerous enough to fill a goodly fasciculus. I hear poor Sweetman of the Calendar is no more. He had a volume on the stocks which he was about to commence when he was here a couple of years ago. Poor little fellow, I am sorry for him. I hope there will be some one to step into his place and keep up the series. Are you likely to have anything for the Association of Librarians at the end of September?”

*From Hans C. Hamilton.*

“East End, Finchley, London, August 25, 1884.

“DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“I congratulate you heartily on the completion of your magnificent work, ‘The Facsimiles of the National Manuscripts of Ireland,’ and I thank you sincerely for placing my name amongst your select friends at page 356. It is gratifying to me to be named in such an artistic and valuable publication. I sincerely hope that before long the present volume of my Irish Calendar will be published. My brother

sends you his most kind remembrances. I was very sorry to hear of Sweetman's death.

"I am always,  
"Yours most truly,  
"HANS C. HAMILTON."

*From Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

"August, 1884.

"I have got a copy of your 'Chartularies,' vol. i., from Hodges & Co., and have devoted this day to its perusal. It's the richest collection of such documents yet printed, far and away. And the text seems accurately rendered. The book is a vast mine of treasure, and it is as yet our only Chartulary worth the name. I hope you will get on speedily with your second volume, and that you will give us some account of the Abbey to the Dissolution, and finally a rattling fine 'Index Hominum et Locorum.' The 'Index Hominum' will be of great importance in fixing the dates of witnesses."

*From Rev. A. Napier.*

"I have this day despatched to you the 'Life of O'Conor,' registered. I could not have settled the matter of the false reading introduced by Dr. Campbell without the aid of this curious and rare volume."

*From J. Cashel Hoey.*

"I am very glad to learn that the Ashburnham Manuscripts are in your charge."

*From Henry Bradshaw.*

"King's College, Cambridge.

"Your kind letter has done me good. You are the only man I know sufficiently interested in the matter [Irish civil wars' period] to give me any trustworthy information."



*From Dr. S. R. Gardiner.*

Bromley, Kent.

“Your reference to the Report enables me to make inquiries of Miss Hickson. I have simply referred to General Dunne’s letter in the Report. I cannot lay my hands on his original letter, but I am almost certain that the manuscript is the property of an Irish peer, and therefore a different one from General Plunket Dunne’s. I will have the whole question gone into, and let you know the result. It is very kind of you to have written on the subject.”

*From E. Maunde Thompson.*

“British Museum, London.

“I congratulate you on bringing a fine work so successfully to a close. The reprint of the Introduction is most handy. I often find that I want to refer to them, and handling big books for references is a great trouble. I hope, however, that this is not the end of your work in this line. A deal has yet to be done for the history of early Irish writing.”

*From the Marquess of Ormonde.*

The Castle, Kilkenny.

“Will you come down here on Friday week and stay till Monday? I purpose making some improvements in the Muniment Room here, and I should be much obliged if you would give me your valuable advice in the matter.”

*From T. D. Sullivan.*

“*Nation* Office, Dublin, September 9, 1884.

“In the *Nation* of last Saturday we had a review of your ‘Account’ of the National Manuscripts of Ireland. I hope you will be pleased with it, and heartily congratulate you on the completion of your great work, which will be an everlasting monument to your learning and your patriotism. Ireland may be congratulated that the work was placed in such competent

and sympathetic hands. I hope that further occupation of the same nature may be found for them. I shall certainly call at the Academy to have a look at the new volumes. How I wish I could spend much time there! I have always regarded the library of the Royal Irish Academy as one of the most delightful places in Dublin."

*From Dr. S. R. Gardiner.*

"Bromley, Kent, November 16, 1884.

"Thank you for the reference to the Preface on the question of ports held.

"I am very glad to hear that there is another volume of the 'Confederation' coming. Is anything to be done with the Rinuccini Manuscripts? I suppose the value of that does not begin till 1645, which is a date far ahead of me as yet.

"I think I have heard you say that the mistakes in Irish names in the Calendar of the Carew Manuscripts were very great, and I suppose Sweetman was not very accurate in such matters."

The Rev. J. Graves writes of the portrait of Owen Roe O'Neill in the *Ulster Journal*—

"It bears all the evidence of being a fancy portrait. Did you see the painting, or do you know where it is now? I am sorry you could not have engraved the portraits of the Earl of Clanrickarde and of Sir Roger O'Shaughnessy of that period, which are at Kilkenny Castle. Sir Roger, with his red beard and fine head, is a noble portrait."

*From His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant.*

"Viceregal Lodge, Dublin, July 16, 1885.

"DEAR MR. GILBERT,

"Let me thank you for the volume which you have been good enough to send me. In turning over the pages since its arrival, for I have not had time, of course, to

do more, I can see how interesting a collection of National Manuscripts it is. If Ireland leaves me any leisure, I shall hope to become better acquainted with its contents, and if not, I shall look forward to reading it in private life.

“Believe me, yours faithfully,

“CARNARVON.”

In the latter end of the year 1884 the Secretary of the Public Record Office, London, wrote—

“I fear there is not the slightest prospect, owing to the exhaustion of funds, of the Commissioners authorizing any further work being undertaken in Ireland this year. I have duly received your reports on manuscripts of Waterford, Jesuits, See of Dublin (Archbishop Trench), and Earl of Fingall.

“I duly received your reports on the Ossory and Galway manuscripts, and they have been sent to the printers.”

So attractive were the volumes of the “Facsimiles of the National Manuscripts” that an effort was made to induce Government to issue a second edition of even the first part. In May, 1884, however, Mr. H. G. Reid, in an official letter to Gilbert, wrote as follows :—

“Mr. Pigott desires me to say that he could not undertake to publish a fresh edition of any of these books without positive orders from the Treasury to do so; nor does he think that their lordships would be, just now, disposed to entertain any proposal of the kind.”

## CHAPTER XVI

1887-1889

Death of D. F. MacCarthy—Munster Bank Losses—Death of Mary Gilbert—Chartularies of St. Mary's Abbey and Abbey of St. Thomas, Dublin—Governor of National Gallery, Ireland—"Dictionary of National Biography"—Dublin Corporation Records—Proposed Translation of Irish Texts—Letters.

IN 1882 the sunshine of Villa Nova was again overshadowed by the death of Denis Florence MacCarthy, whose last letter to Mary Gilbert betrays the failing condition of his health in the tremulous handwriting. He writes from London asking his friends to find him a house as near as possible to his daughter's convent, and to Villa Nova. The house was found, and the poet came home, after many exiles in foreign lands, to die in his native country among those whom he loved and who loved him best. His loss was keenly and deeply felt by John and Mary Gilbert, for whom life was now marked by so many gravestones.

The health of Gilbert's only remaining and beloved sister now began visibly to decline. A trip to Rome was proposed, but her strength was unequal to the effort. Father T. L. Carey, of St. Isidore's College, Rome, wrote to her brother in May, 1885—

"My friend Mr. Bliss has just told me that some days ago he sent to the Record Office, London, copies of some interesting letters of O'Neill and O'Donnell. I believe they are kept in the *reserved part* of the Record Office, but I have no doubt *you* will be able to get the use of them. I thought you would like to have the information. I hope you are

quite strong, also Miss Gilbert. Could you not manage to take a run to Rome some time while I am here? I need not tell you how glad I should be to have you in Rome, even for a short time."

To which Gilbert replied—

"I hope I shall be able to see the papers mentioned, being much interested in the subject. Pray give my best regards to Mr. Bliss when you see him. I had hoped to have gone to Italy this year, but the continued ill-health of my only sister keeps me at home. She suffers from great weakness, for which the doctors appear unable to find any remedy, except time and rest.

"The third volume of the 'History of the Irish Confederation' will soon be out of the printer's hands. It extends from September, 1643, to October, 1644, and contains a large body of interesting matter relative to the Irish Catholics, hitherto unpublished. The fourth volume, which is in preparation, will be from November, 1644, to the arrival of Rinuccini in Ireland, in November, 1645.

"I have been endeavouring to find some details of the trial and execution of Francis Matthew, Franciscan, at Cork, in 1644. He is mentioned in the 'Aphorismical Discovery,' vol. i., p. 190; also in Wadding's 'Scriptores' (1806) p. 83, where he is stated to have been twice tortured. Wadding says he wrote an account of the Irish Franciscans, then in his (Wadding's) possession. Perhaps you may know some particulars as to the circumstances of his death. Some Protestant writers say that Matthew admitted that he deserved to be executed for having plotted to have Cork handed over to the Irish Confederates!

"If the Public Library at Rome, which you mentioned some time since, desires to have the publications of the Royal Irish Academy, the heads of the Library should write an official letter of application addressed to the Secretary of the Royal Irish Academy, stating the grounds on which they make their request. You are, no doubt, aware that the *Transactions* of the Academy are chiefly mathematical and scientific.

Four institutions in Rome at present receive the publications of the Royal Irish Academy."

Lady Wilde writes to Mary Gilbert at this time, "What do you mean by getting ill, you who were always so radiant with life and spirits, and in your lovely little Eden?" The illness was, however, no passing ailment. Together with the calamity of her serious breakdown in health came another ruinous stroke of fortune to her brother.

In 1885 the public mind was startled by the unexpected failure of the Munster Bank, which stopped payment owing to the defalcations of an absconding official. Having weathered a former storm of contrary circumstances Gilbert had righted his affairs, and, owing to his ability and indomitable energy, had attained a position, not only of personal honour and distinction, but of comparative financial security. A very short time before its failure he had invested to a considerable extent in shares in the Munster Bank. Speaking later of the disaster which now fell on him without a moment's warning, he said to a friend, "Is it not a strange experience for a man who awakes in the morning, believing himself secure in the possession of a fair share of the needful goods of this world, to go down to breakfast and read his ruin in the newspaper?"

Macaulay says, "Every day shows me more and more how necessary a competence is to a man who desires to be either great or useful." At no time did Gilbert love money. Early in life he had been possessed of such a competence, and had been generous in the use of it, as giving him power to assist intellectual effort in his country; and he had sacrificed more than that competence in order to free himself for the doing of great and useful work. The ruin imposed on him by the failure of the bank seemed to sweep away all possibility of the continued development of projects which he had deeply at heart. His sister, guarded by his care from all knowledge of the disaster, died in January, 1886, unaware that a fresh misfortune had overtaken the brother who had been the idol of her life; and Gilbert stood alone in his

ruined home, those whom he had so faithfully cherished, and who had so loved him, gone, and the sacred home itself apparently no longer to be his.

Call after call from the liquidators of the bank was answered by him, until he had handed over almost all his property, and there was question of disposing of his house, furniture, and library. There remains of this period, drawn up in his handwriting for the liquidators, a list of everything of which he was possessed. Upon Mary's death, however, the policy of insurance on Gilbert's life, which he had held as a provision for his sister in case she survived him, was accepted in final settlement of his affairs with the bank, and his now desolate home remained to him. Happily, he had many friends and sympathizers; and his English cousins, Mrs. George Gilbert and her daughters, who had been during many years frequent visitors at Villa Nova, came to him at this crisis, and helped him through many a grievous hour. His health suffered somewhat for a few months, but his unconquerable courage proved itself once more, and he took up his many works again with all his old vigour and determination.

He now made another attempt to induce the authorities to follow up the publication of the Chartularies of Saint Mary's Abbey, published by Government in the Master of the Rolls' Series, "Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland," with the Chartulary of the Abbey of Saint Thomas in Dublin, but in this he was again disappointed. The Deputy-Keeper of the London Record Office wrote to him in May, 1887—

"I fear that nothing can be done at present with regard to the proposed publication of the Chartulary of the Abbey of Saint Thomas of Canterbury at Dublin. The Treasury has made so material a reduction in our vote for historical publications that we can barely pay for works already sanctioned and set in hand. I cannot advise you to proceed with the preparation of your proposed work, unless you see your way to its publication in some other series, or separately."

The goodwill manifested to the Irish archivist by the heads of noble houses, who continued to make him welcome to pursue his researches in their muniment rooms, is illustrated by the following letters:—

*From the Earl of Fingall.*

“Killeen Castle, August 7, 1887.

“DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“I have to thank you very much for your trouble in connection with my manuscript, and the most interesting account of it in your work. I have another old manuscript entitled ‘A Chartulary of Reading Abbey,’ which I should be glad that you should have a look at. Perhaps you would like to come down here yourself to take a look through anything there may be in the house. It would afford Lady Fingall and myself very much pleasure if you would do so for a few days, and any time that suited you would suit us.

“Believe me, yours truly,

“FINGALL.”

*From Lord Castletown of Upper Ossory.*

“Granston Manor, Abbeyleix, April 8, 1887.

“DEAR SIR,

“I have received through Lord Arthur Butler the Preface to Part IV. of the National Manuscripts, for which I beg to thank you very much. You suggest in your letter to Lord A. Butler that I should have any papers we may have catalogued and described. I am afraid we have too few to make the first process necessary, but I have been looking at the original letters from Edward VI. to Sir B. FitzPatrick, and they are in good preservation, and well worth being described. There are, I think, seven of them. Should you care to have them described, I should be very glad to give permission. I may come across other old documents, but hardly think so. With many thanks for your present,

“Believe me, yours truly,

“CASTLETOWN OF UPPER OSSORY.”



The following letter is concerned with a comparatively late movement regarding the O'Donovan Fund:—

*From the Right Rev. Charles Graves, D.D.*

“The Palace, Henry Street, Limerick,

“February 15, 1887.

“I feel quite grieved and ashamed that I committed a serious fault in not writing to you in the first instance about the administration of the O'Donovan Fund. I could not but feel sure that you would have taken a leading part in any movement intended to acknowledge the merits, both personal and literary, of John O'Donovan. He was one of the most conscientious, as well as the most laborious, of all the men who have devoted themselves to the study of Irish archæology in our time. You must have known and felt all this. But I did not remember what you had said and done, and what office you had undertaken when his friends met to consider the question of a memorial.

“Mr. Maxwell Close will tell you what I propose to have done as regards the O'Donovan Fund, and I am sure you will give him the benefit of your advice and assistance. I am inclined to think that we might leave to him the transaction of the business part of the affair. In going over my books and papers lately, I found that there were two or three matters in which you could help me. You printed a supplementary sheet or pamphlet containing additions to your ‘History of Dublin.’ I regret to say it has been lost.

“Lastly, can you tell me who was the author of an article in that review on the Brehon Laws Commission? He must have been a member of the R.I.A., and very well acquainted with the subject on which he was writing. The work was planned by the original commissioners, Petrie, Todd, Larcom, and myself, and then mainly executed by O'Donovan and O'Curry.”

*From the Right Rev. Dr. Reeves.*

“Conway House, Dunmurry, Co. Antrim,

“May 18, 1887.

“MY DEAR GILBERT,

“I am glad to see your handwriting again after long abeyance. You have had heavy afflictions, and varied losses, enough to prostrate any man, and your recovery of health and energy is a great blessing. I have not seen the Report of the Royal Commission of Historical Manuscripts which you mention, and I would enjoy very much the reading of your article therein. I regret to say that for six months my health has been unsatisfactory, and that my spirits and energy are very low. I have neither read nor written anything in my old line during this time, and I fear that I am not likely to have much freedom, or even inclination, for such employment. I find the duties of my office heavy and exacting, quite enough to tax the energies of a young man, whereas I am now past seventy-two.

“I have not heard of or from Hennessy for an age. As regards the ‘Chartulary of Tristernagh,’ which is in the Armagh Library, I don’t know what may be the disposition of the existing authorities as to the lending it out. The librarian now is the Rev. Benjamin Wade, whose address is, ‘The Library, Armagh.’ I have not seen that beloved repository, nor even been in Armagh since the end of October last. I have not yet seen the facsimile of the ‘Book of Ballymote;’ in fact, I have seen nothing of old places and old objects, and am as much out of the way of archæology as a man can well be.

“Yours faithfully,

“WM. DOWN AND CONNOR.”

Having steadily in view the publication of all available historic records in connection with the true history of Ireland in the period on which it was his desire to throw light,

Gilbert applied at this time for a particular permission, and received the following in reply :—

*From Classon Porter.*

“Dublin, Rolls Chamber, June 7, 1887.

“DEAR SIR,

“With reference to your letter of the 19th ult., enclosing a proposal for the publication of certain valuable historical records, I have been directed by his Honour to inform you that he has forwarded your proposal to the Lords Commissioners of H.M. Treasury, with a strong recommendation to their lordships to sanction the undertaking of the work. I was able, also, to refer their lordships to the former correspondence on this subject between them and Sir E. Sullivan. I presume that Lord Plunkett, the Archbishop of Dublin, in whose custody these records are, will be willing to give his consent and co-operation in the matter.

“Yours faithfully,

“CLASSON PORTER.”

*From Prof. H. d'Arbois de Jubainville.*

“Jubainville par Martigny

“les Gerbonvaux (Vosges),

“le 8 septembre, 1887

“CHER MONSIEUR GILBERT,

“Votre lettre m'a fait un grand plaisir mêlé de chagrin. J'ai eu grand plaisir à vous lire et à vous savoir bien portant, bien triste de savoir la cause de votre silence. Cependant vous m'avez levé un poids lourd à porter sur le cœur. Il m'était pénible de penser que peut-être mes deux compte-rendus de vos *Facsimiles* vous avaient mécontenté et que c'était la cause de votre silence avec moi. Personne n'a été pour moi plus bienveillant que vous à Dublin, et jamais je n'oublierai toutes vos bontés pour moi.

“Je vous remercie de votre article de l'*Athenæum*. J'ai

fait revenir de Londres un exemplaire du Livre de Ballymote. Je n'ai pas entendu parler de la discussion de la Chambre des Communes au sujet des *Brehon Laws*. Auriez vous la bonté de me donner la dessus quelque détails?

“ Il y a en Irlande deux clergymen Catholiques qui font de bons travaux, les PP. MacCarthy et Hogan. Si vous avez occasion de les voir, dites leur que je publierai volontiers des travaux d'eux.

“ Ton à vous de cœur,

“ H. D'ARBOIS DE JUBAINVILLE.”

In 1887, having been chosen to fill a post of public trust of which the duties were congenial to his tastes, harmonizing well with the nature of his works, he received the following communication :—

*From Lord Adolphus Vane Tempest.*

“ Viceregal Lodge, Dublin,

“ December 30, 1887.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I am directed by His Excellency to notify to you that he will be pleased to appoint you to the Board of Governors of the National Gallery of Ireland in place of the late Earl of Meath, if you are willing to undertake the duties of the post.

“ I am, sir,

“ Yours faithfully,

“ ADOLPHUS VANE TEMPEST.”

His love of art was genuine, his taste pure, his interest in portraiture, as history, was keen in proportion to his passion for the vivid presentment of truth in the past ; and his zeal for the discovery, preservation, and reproduction of the portraits of remarkable Irishmen, especially of those worthy of the veneration of their fellow-countrymen, was unflinching. In many instances he made great efforts to

familiarize his readers with the features of men whose faces were only to be seen on the walls of the monasteries or palaces of Italy and Spain, or otherwise to secure as illustrations of his historical works rare copies of interesting portraits or pictures of which the world knew little or nothing.

The appended excerpts from correspondence on these subjects will just suggest his method of working with a view to procuring the pictured presentment of heroes or strenuous workers for the cause of Ireland in the past.

*From Rev. P. S. Dunne, O.S.F.*

“ St. Isidore’s, Rome, August 4, 1877.

“ I have been told by Dr. Brady that you are anxious to obtain drawings or photographs of some of the figures in the Theological Hall. So soon as I received Dr. Brady’s letter I sent for a photographer, who told me that not only can any of the frescoes be taken, but that he would undertake to do so. I shall be very happy to engage the services of one of the best photographers in Rome, and send you the portraits with as little delay as possible.”

*From the Same.*

“ August 27, 1877.

“ I enclose copies of the photographs in order that you may see whether they will suit. In case they should not, I can have them taken again. As you will see, Fleming comes out very well, the others not being so well defined, in consequence of the presence of too much light. The photographers required to cover up all the windows on that side. If you intend your book for the public, I would wish to have a few copies here.”

*From the Same.*

“ September 3, 1877.

“ I shall have Power and Colgan retaken in a few days. We are at present covering the windows at that end of the

schoolroom more carefully than before, and I hope there will be no fear of a second failure. Should it be in my power to render you any further service, I hope you will tell me in what way, as I should consider my time well spent in such a task."

*From the Same.*

"October, 1877.

"I forward the two remaining photographs, which, on the occasion of our last attempt, came out more successfully. I got them coloured also according to your wish. The colouring of Colgan is very well, but Power's upper lip is more like the rest of his face—that is, fresh and youthful looking. His hair is light. With this exception, Power is very well taken, and I think there would be little difficulty found in having his features."

*From the Same.*

"December 27, 1877.

"I enclose the photographs which in your last letter you wished to have taken and forwarded. I am of opinion that the photographer has fairly done his part, particularly in Fleming's case. The colouring is also well executed, Fleming's figure coming out to great advantage (except in the face, where the colours are too lively), a faithful likeness. The colouring of the other is not within many degrees of being so good. The features are overdone, and the expression is consequently lost, at least to some extent. I do not know whether this will satisfy you. I should have sent you these sooner had I not entertained the false hope of being able to discover some of the books you wished me to procure for you. The bookseller met me with the most satisfactory assurances in the beginning, but was unable afterwards to realize all his boastful promises. However, he tells me he is determined to succeed yet. I hope so. The reason it is so difficult to find these books is because the old libraries

have been long since disposed of, and for the most part lie *perdu* in the bookshops. When I write again, I hope I shall have better news."

*From the Same.*

"February 21, 1878.

"After a very long interval, I am at length able to send another copy of the fresco and some gratifying news. The present photograph is, I think, far superior to the last in the truth of its colouring. The figure on the left corresponding to that of Wadding on the right has lost, to some extent, its expression of countenance. But the heads are so small that the touch must be extremely delicate, and therefore very difficult, even for an artist. I should imagine, however, that you might get a better expression should you consider it essential. But in that case it would be necessary to detach it from the group. You will be glad to hear that I have got another assurance of success from my friend the bookseller. The books are all found, and will be on their way to Rome in a few days. I am very thankful for the papers you sent me."

*From Rev. P. T. Cleary, O.S.F.*

"4, Merchants' Quay, Dublin.

"I have just received a letter from Fr. Carey. I send you an extract from his letter that concerns you. 'Please give my kindest and best regards to Mr. Gilbert, and tell him that Fr. Bonaventure Baron died on 18 March, 1696, and precisely at hora 4 noctis, as the tombstone says. Also tell him that I have forwarded to the Convent of Clonmel, by order of Fr. Cooney, an oil-painting of B. Baron, taken from the old plate I found here. I could not get the plate photographed; it was stained. But the painting is very well done, and exact copy of the print.'"

*From Evelyn Philip Shirley.*

“Ettington Park, Stratford-on-Avon.

“Pray accept my best thanks for sending me that curious print of Sir Anthony Shirley, which is different from any which I have of him, and which I have added to my collection of Shirley portraits.”

*From the Duke of Leinster.*

“October, 1884.

“Would it be possible for me to get the facsimile of Queen Mary’s patent which you have included in the ‘National Manuscripts,’ part iv., plate 2? I should much like to put it among my collection of family portraits and prints.”

*From the Same.*

“December 23, 1890.

“I have a copy of the Singleton print of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, here in my father’s collection of family portraits; but I do not know who has the Ozias Humphrey drawing it was taken from. I am glad you liked the pheasants.”

*From Richard Nugent.*

“January 31, 1888.

“In answer to your question as to whether I had included amongst my ‘collections’ an account of the extant portraits of the family, I grieve to say I have not, and am therefore very glad to hear of any such as those you have seen at Lord Gormanston’s. I suppose he is now in his Governorship of one of the Colonies, or I would write to him, either direct or through a mutual friend, to ask him whom the pictures in his possession are supposed to represent.

“I will inquire, as you suggest, if there are any in the houses of the old families in Meath or Westmeath, but I have never heard if there were any such.”



*From Henry E. Doyle, C.B.*

“National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, March 2, 1888.

“Many thanks for your letter, and for your intervention about the portrait of Dr. Madden. I have just come from seeing the one offered, and it really is too much of a daub. It was evidently not much originally, but has been evidently spoiled by a *restorer* a few years ago. Dr. Madden, who has a much better one in his dining-room, I thought, took my objection very well, and gave me two engravings of his father, one of which I will hang amongst the portraits.”

In 1890 he caused a copy to be made of the portrait of O'Sullivan Beare, Count of Berehaven, which is to be seen in the Colegio de Nobles Irlandeses at Salamanca. The Rev. Denis Murphy, S.J., made the necessary arrangement with the college.

*From Rev. Denis Murphy, S. J.*

“Dublin, July 15, 1890.

“I enclose you Dr. Cowan's letter. Inquiries are going on about the history of the Wogan portrait. I have heard that Lord Talbot's is a copy, and ours the original. As soon as I hear something final of the matter I shall let you know.”

*From Rev. J. Cowan to Rev. D. Murphy, S. J.*

“Colegio de Nobles Irlandeses, Salamanca,

“July 11, 1890.

“I am glad to learn that the picture arrived safe, and that it pleases you and your Irish friends. I may tell you that I showed it to several Spaniards and Irish here, who, comparing it with the original, declared it to be an excellent copy.

“I do not remember whether I told you that I got the original beautifully and permanently restored by the same

artist, D. Mariano Lafuente. I have no doubt the same artist would undertake to make copies of the paintings you mention. The three paintings in the room next where you were writing are those of S. Ignacius, S. Francis Xavier, and Ven. Thomas Vitus; in another room is that of Father Joseph Delamar."

During several years Gilbert contributed from time to time short biographies of Irishmen to the "Dictionary of National Biography." With his never-flagging desire for justice and accuracy, he took great pains to include both of these qualities within the limits prescribed, which were often much too narrow in proportion to the importance of the subject. Not infrequently he was troubled at seeing the lack of thorough knowledge displayed in the treatment of these short records, and the easy carelessness with which serious truths concerning them were relegated to obscurity. In this spirit he devoted precious time to amending and supplementing, out of his own store of superior knowledge, such articles as Leslie Stephen submitted to him for criticism and revision. The following passages from letters are selected from a large correspondence between Gilbert and the editor of the "Dictionary of National Biography," too private and personal for publication:—

*From Leslie Stephen.*

"'Dictionary of National Biography,'

"15, Waterloo Place, London.

"DEAR SIR,

"I am much obliged by your 'Life of Bellings,' which is, I think, in all respects, what we need. Articles based upon hitherto unpublished materials are, of course, specially valuable . . . The great difficulty, as I find, is to induce contributors to give a maximum of information with a minimum of verbosity. In some cases the process of smelting the

rough ore supplied to me is most troublesome. But your article is in need of no such attentions. We shall send you a new list in a fortnight or so.

"Yours, with many thanks,

"L. STEPHEN."

*From the Same.*

"I regret the mistake you mention. The article is written by a man in whom I have every confidence, but who had on this occasion gone rather outside his line. I wish that the dictionary were so accurate, and excited so much interest in the world, that a mistake more or less were a matter of any importance."

The "mistake more or less" was just the thing that Gilbert could not tolerate, and it was to secure accuracy in the recorded facts concerning the lives of men connected with the history of Ireland that he would turn aside from his large work to the task of condensing, into almost impossible limits, the truths which it was in his power to supply or determine.

During this period he was also contributing articles on Irish subjects to the *Athenæum*, with the purpose of ensuring accuracy in printed records touching on the history of Ireland. Dr. MacColl writes to him in May, 1888, "I need hardly say I shall be delighted if you will review 'Ireland in '98';" and of a review in that journal, John O'Hanlon, librarian of the King's Inn Library, Dublin, remarks—

"It is really singular that people never think of finding out what the old inhabitants of the country thought, how they viewed the course of events, and the expressions given to those views and thoughts by the writers on their side. I know, as a matter of fact, Dr. Ball took great pains about his book, yet I am quite certain he did not consult the series of books in which you are giving the true history of Ireland in the seventeenth century."

*From Mrs. Atkinson.*<sup>1</sup>

“84, Drumcondra Road, Dublin,

“July 7, 1887.

“DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“I don't know how to thank you for your kind thought and valuable present, the ‘Account of Facsimiles of National Manuscripts of Ireland.’

“I have often asked for it at the library in Kildare Street. I owe a great deal to that book, as well as to other works of yours. Now that I am fortunate enough to possess a copy of my own, I shall read it with great care and comfort.

“Dr. Atkinson hopes to have the pleasure of calling on you in a day or two. Meanwhile, he joins me in offering you very kind regards, and hoping that you may have every blessing to enable you to continue your valuable labours in the field of Irish history during a long course of peaceful and happy years.

“Believe me to remain,

“Sincerely and gratefully yours,

“SARAH ATKINSON.”

The following letter of Gilbert, and the reply, suggest the pains invariably taken by him to get at the truth by seeking it at its source—

*From J. T. Gilbert to Rev. J. T. Towers, O.P.*

“Villa Nova, Blackrock, Co. Dublin,

“August 4, 1887.

“REV. SIR,

“I take the liberty of asking you to be kind enough to favour me with replies to the queries on the other side in relation to an ancient member of your Order,

<sup>1</sup> Author of “Mary Aikenhead: her life, her work, and her friends; (foundress of the Irish Sisters of Charity),” and of “Essays” on various Irish subjects, including biographical sketches of Eugene O'Curry, and John Foley, the sculptor. These are the first, and probably the only, memoirs written of these distinguished Irishmen. Mrs. Atkinson was, during many years, the intimate and beloved friend of Gilbert's wife.

Dominic, or Daniel O'Daly, founder of the Corpo Santo College, Lisbon, about the year 1634. I make this request because I have undertaken to write an account of O'Daly for the 'Dictionary of National Biography,' now in progress at London, to extend to fifty volumes, of which several have already been published. I am acquainted with all that is given about O'Daly by Bishop Burke in his 'Hibernia Dominicana,' of which I possess a complete copy. I have also papers relative to O'Daly with which Bishop Burke does not appear to have been conversant, and which have not hitherto been published.

"You will, I feel confident, be anxious to aid me in doing justice to the memory of O'Daly, of whom no accurate account has yet been printed in English, although he held an eminent position in the Order of St. Dominic, and did a great deal for Irish Catholics in the times of persecution. My friend, Father Fagan, parish priest of this parish, tells me that he is sure you will give me any information in your power. Enclosed is an account of a book which I am now bringing out, which contains an interesting letter written in 1644, relative to Terence Albert O'Brien, the Provincial of the Dominicans in Ireland, subsequently Bishop of Emly, and one of the martyrs of his Order. As the notice of O'Daly is to be printed immediately, an early reply will oblige.

"Yours faithfully,

"JOHN T. GILBERT.

"Rev. J. T. Towers, O.P.

"*Queries.*—1. Does the Order in Ireland or Portugal possess any likeness of O'Daly, or any of his original letters or papers?

"2. Is the inscribed tombstone of O'Daly mentioned in 'Hibernia Dominicana,' p. 421, still extant in the cloister of the Corpo Santo College; and did his grave suffer from earthquake in 1757?

"3. Does the convent of 'Bom Successo' still exist, and are any memorials of O'Daly preserved there?"

*From Rev. Thomas J. Smyth, O.P., D.D.*

“30, Rutland Square, W., Dublin,

“August, 4, 1887.

“DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“In reply to your favour of this morning, I beg to say that the tomb of Father Dominick O'Daly is still preserved in our Church of Corpo Santo, Lisbon. The only document which ever fell into my hands in relation to him was the original deed of gift made by the Countess of Atalya, and signed by him, in which she transferred her house and lands to him for a Convent of Irish Dominican nuns. Some of the provisions of this deed are very curious, such as the admittance of three Portuguese ladies who were to wear a badge declaring that all their good works were to go to the benefit of the Countess of Atalya. The further history of the foundation is full of interest, as at that time Portugal was under Philip II. of Spain, who insisted upon the Royal placet in the foundation of every religious community. Dominick O'Daly went to Madrid for that purpose, and after many delays obtained the Royal consent, on condition that he would raise a regiment of Irish soldiers, 1000 strong, for the wars going on in Flanders. Father O'Daly came to Ireland, and in a very short time raised the soldiers, and placed them under the orders of the Spanish Commanders in the Low Countries, hastening himself to Madrid to obtain his reward. Again he was refused, offers were made to him of pensioning certain relatives of his own—offers which he indignantly rejected—and declared that he would not be satisfied with less than the fulfilment of the Royal promise. After many delays and disappointments, Philip at length yielded, and so the Convent of Bom Successo was founded. From that date up to the present it [has] remained in connection with the Irish province of Dominicans. At the present moment it has 32 religious, all Irish except two, and their schools are made up of children of the first families of Portugal and the Brazils. A great deal of interesting information is given by a Portuguese

Dominican, Padre Sousa, about this Convent of Bom Successo, and of Corpo Santo, and incidentally of Father O'Daly. I enclose a copy of the deed of gift by the Countess of Atalya which a Portuguese tried to turn into English, the attempt was a poor one, however, it will give you an idea of the original.

"Padre Sousa has written a very interesting history of all the Dominican foundations in Portugal, and has given also a sketch of some of their illustrious members. The work is in Portuguese; but I am sure the nuns of Bom Successo would only be too happy to transcribe for you any information that may assist you in the great work in which you are engaged. Their history from 1649 up to the present is highly interesting, braving as they did every storm that swept away the religious orders from Portugal. Even as late as my own time, an attempt was made to take possession of the property of the nuns, which, of course, I resisted, and succeeded through the interposition of Lord Lytton, who was at that time British Minister at the Court of Portugal. This attempt was made by the Portuguese authorities about the time of the return of the Prince of Wales<sup>1</sup> from India, and as he called in Lisbon, I thought it would be in the interests of the Convent if we could get his Royal Highness to pay a visit to the community. He very kindly consented, and came with his surroundings and partook of the hospitality we were able to give him. Since that time Bom Successo was left in peace.

"Any further information I can give you I shall only be too happy to furnish it. Meantime, if you wish to communicate directly with the Convent, I enclose an introduction.

"Yours very truly,

"THOMAS J. SMYTH, O.P."

In 1887 Gilbert was requested by the Corporation of Dublin to undertake the work of editing and publishing the city muniments, a task which required great palæographical skill and knowledge of history. Early in life he had, for purposes of his own research, consulted the municipal

<sup>1</sup> Now King Edward VII.

muniments, making himself thoroughly acquainted with their contents. In a series of large splendid manuscript volumes, which he entitled "De Rebus Eblanæ,"<sup>1</sup> he had collected from many sources selections from writings bearing on the history of the city, and including many excerpts from the Charters, Assembly Rolls, and other Ancient Records of Dublin. During a long course of years the Corporation of Dublin had appealed to him for information in all cases within their jurisdiction requiring to be decided by precedent. Decisions of suits at law sometimes waited on such research, and the histories of the proprietorship of localities; leases; construction, and regulating of water-courses, etc., made reference to the ancient rules and customs necessary. As Gilbert had already mastered these ancient records, it was ultimately resolved by the Municipal Council to invite him to render them accessible to the public, and in 1889 he began the publication of the "Calendar of Ancient Records of Dublin," which are illustrated with facsimiles of manuscripts, rare engravings, portraits, buildings, bridges, and other features of the city no longer existing.

In 1888 Gilbert made an appeal to the Council of the Royal Irish Academy to take up the work of translating certain of the Old Irish Texts, the contents of which were practically inaccessible to students of the ancient Irish literature. The correspondence which follows illustrates the course of this movement.

*From J. T. Gilbert to Dr. Whitley Stokes.*

"Villa Nova, Blackrock, Co. Dublin,

"January 24, 1888.

"MY DEAR DR. STOKES,

"Enclosed you will find a brief report from this morning's Dublin paper of a proposition which I brought yesterday before a public meeting of the Royal Irish Academy in relation to a subject in which you are deeply interested.

<sup>1</sup> This collection of manuscripts, "De Rebus Eblanæ," is now in the possession of the Corporation of Dublin.



You will see that it has been referred to the Council to consider and reflect upon.

“My idea, briefly, is to open the work to every *qualified* Celtologist.

“If you approve of the idea, perhaps you will give it the advantage of your valuable support in the press, with any modifications you may think desirable. One of the pieces I hope to see produced, as proposed, is the Τάρι βό Cúairtíe translated and edited by you. I should add that I have no interest in these matters beyond a strong desire to see our old literary remains published by competent hands, and beyond endeavouring to effect this, there will be no interference on my part.

“Dr. Atkinson has not been re-elected ‘Todd Professor,’ and at a recent meeting of the Council of the Academy he renounced all further work on an Irish dictionary.

“Believe me to be,

“Yours very truly,

“JOHN T. GILBERT.”

*From Dr. Whitley Stokes.*

“15, Grenville Place, London, S.W.,

“January 25, 1888.

“MY DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“I am now, and shall be for the next three months, so busy with my *Anglo-Indian Codes*, vol. iii., that I cannot write fully on the important subject of your letter. I will merely set down briefly my ideas on the four points mentioned therein—

“1. As there is now no one in Ireland, except Mr. Hennessy, competent to edit a middle-Irish manuscript, it is obvious that the Academy, if it wishes to make the contents of its facsimiles acceptable to the public within any reasonable time, must resort to such scholars as Mr. Standish-Hayes O’Grady, Dr. Kuno Meyer, Prof. Thurneysen, Dr. Schirmer, and (if he would consent) Prof. Windisch.

"2. But in my opinion the wisest thing for the Academy to do at present would be to spend their available funds in bringing out a photographic facsimile of the 'Book of Lecan.' (The photographic process practised by the Clarendon Press is very superior to that employed in producing the facsimile of the 'Book of Ballymote,' and should be adopted by the Academy.) As well as I remember, the whole of the 'Book of Lecan' could be successfully photographed; and this manuscript has the great advantage of containing independent copies of much of the contents of the 'Book of Ballymote.' The legible parts of the 'Yellow Book of Lecan' (in T.C.D.) and of the 'Book of Fermoy' should also be photographed.

"3. As to the *Ṭáin Bó Cúach*, Prof. Windisch intends to publish it, I believe, from the 'Yellow Book of Lecan.' He has a copy of the text, and has begun the translation. I, at least, should never think of competing with him.

"4. Dr. Atkinson has done wisely in giving up his project of an Irish Thesaurus. I wonder how much it has cost already?

"P.S.—You will see a specimen of the photolithography done by the Clarendon Press in Mr. R. Ellis's xii. facsimiles from Latin manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, 1885. I don't know the special name of the process, but I was told that it was inexpensive, and certainly the results are far clearer and sharper than your Ballymote volume. The spaces between the lines are white. I have no doubt your Dublin photographer could easily learn this process, if he does not already know it."

*From J. T. Gilbert to Dr. Whitley Stokes.*

"Villa Nova, Blackrock, co. Dublin,

"January 26, 1888.

"MY DEAR DR. STOKES,

"My pleasure at receiving your kind note was much increased by finding that your ideas correspond almost entirely with those entertained by me. There are, however,

one or two points on which I should like to say a few words. First, let me state that the names of those you mention as editors are exactly those who, I hope, may be induced to come forward. I have sent a copy of the proposal to Kuno Meyer, and am writing by this post to Standish Hayes O'Grady. I will also send copies of the printed slip to Thurneysen, Windisch, and Schirmer. Might not Ascoli also be communicated with?

"I never approved of the photolithograph of the 'Book of Ballymotc.' There are many errors in the introduction with regard to the history of this valuable manuscript. See the *Athenæum* of September 3, 1887.

"I am sorry to say that from what I hear of Mr. Hennessy's state of health there is not very much prospect of his doing work for some time. His 'Annals of Ulster' is still unpublished.

"You may recollect that many years ago I proposed to photograph the 'Book of Lecan' as a memorial volume for Dr. Todd, but this was prevented mainly by the opposition of Sir S. Ferguson. To do the whole volume now would be costly, and would be, to a great extent, as you observe, a reproduction of pieces in 'Ballymote.' It occurred to me that your views as to more facsimiles might be met by the Academy undertaking to furnish (gratis) photographs of such pieces as the editors might desire, from Dublin manuscripts not conveniently accessible to them. The 'Yellow Book of Lecan' belongs to T.C.D., which ought to photolithograph it. I fear that the 'Book of Fermoy' is too faded and stained to be induced to come out by the sun.

"The Council of the Academy does not include any one qualified to form accurate views on the matter which has been referred to it, but I believe that nearly all the members are upright in their ideas, and anxious to do what is most for the interests of the institution. It has occurred to me that under the circumstances it would be desirable to get short expressions of opinion from the persons really conversant with the subject, and to have these printed, so as to influence public opinion, and to go to the House of Commons if there

should be a failure with the Academy Council. Among these statements any one from you would be of the highest importance.

"I was very glad to see your volume of Anglo-Indian Codes, and at once had the work ordered for our new National Library of Ireland, of which I am one of the four trustees appointed by the Crown. I look forward to the time when I may have the great pleasure of seeing the Anglo-Indian Codes, followed by the Old Irish Codes,<sup>1</sup> under the same editorship.

"I am happy to say that I do not think there is much probability of the existing unsatisfactory state of affairs in that direction being allowed to continue without attention being again called to it in the House of Commons.

"It would not be easy to answer your inquiry as to the cost of the projected Irish 'Thesaurus,' but we shall in due time obtain all the details.

"Yours very truly,

"JOHN T. GILBERT."

*From Dr. Kuno Meyer.*

"University College, Liverpool, February 3, 1888.

"DEAR MR. GILBERT,

"I have thought much about your proposal, and had some correspondence with Stokes and other scholars about it. My views are these, and I hope you and the committee to whom the matter has been referred may consider them before any definite conclusion is arrived at.

"The publication in facsimile of the four great Irish Manuscripts has enabled scholars all over the world to become acquainted with the oldest literature extant, and they have at once set to work to utilize the vast materials. The Irish texts of Windisch and Stokes will be continued, and may become a 'Corpus' of middle-Irish literature in the course of time. Atkinson, Stokes, and myself have published, and, I hope,

<sup>1</sup> The Brehon Laws.

shall go on publishing, separate texts of importance with translations. No doubt it is sometimes difficult to find a publisher, and our work is not paid. Yet I think Atkinson is right in saying that this work will not be abandoned. But I also think it might be supported, facilitated, and directed in a way from which the public at large would derive greater benefit.

“On the other hand, our greatest need is to have more materials yet, and as long as the ‘Book of Lecan’ and the ‘Yellow Book of Lecan’ are not photographed, I think the other work must be left to go on by itself. But here is my point. Would it not be possible, with the money you have at your disposal, not only to reproduce these two manuscripts, but also to furnish them with introductions, summaries of contents, in some cases translations, notes, glossary, etc., in a yet more perfect way than Atkinson has done in the case of the ‘Book of Leinster’? If you could see your way to unite several scholars in that work (though it might take years), it would be the best thing you could do under the present circumstances.

“I may tell you that Windisch is seriously thinking of a complete edition of the *Ṭáin Bó Cúáilge*, that I have just completed a translation of the ‘*Íochinare Emere*,’ which will appear in the new *Archæological Review*, and that several other scholars are engaged on minor texts.

“With very kind regards,

“Yours faithfully,

“KUNO MEYER.”

*From Dr. R. Thurneysen.*

“Fribourg, 5 février, 1888.

“CHER MONSIEUR,

“Je vous remercie de votre honorée lettre du 28 janv. Je suis tout-à-fait de votre avis; si vous venez à faire connaître au public irlandais et anglais le contenu des manuscrits irlandais, il n’y a aucune raison pour attendre plus longtemps. Car on n’arrivera jamais ou très tard à publier

en facsimilé *tous* les manuscrits qui contiennent des textes intéressants.

“ J’ai hésité assez longtemps avant de répondre. La raison en est que la nouvelle position dans laquelle je me trouve comme professeur à l’université de Fribourg, occupe presque tout mon temps ; il ne me reste donc guère de loisir pour des travaux scientifiques qui ne se rattachent pas étroitement aux cours que j’ai à donner, et cet état durera probablement encore plus d’un an.

“ Mais d’autre part, l’Académie royale de l’Irlande a rendu aux Celtophiles du continent de tels services en publiant en facsimilé les plus importants manuscrits du moyen âge, que je crois ne pas devoir refuser, si, par mon faible concours, je puis lui rendre un service, et lui témoigne ma reconnaissance.

“ Il y a une autre difficulté, la langue. La langue française, que vous admettez, me semble très peu faite pour des traductions de l’irlandais, parce qu’elle manque complètement de mots composés, qui abondent dans les textes irlandais. Vous ne parlez pas de l’allemand, une langue naturelle, probablement parce qu’elle est peu connue du public anglais. Si elle doit être résolue, j’aimerais mieux me servir de l’anglais, me faisant assister par quelqu’un de plus versé dans l’emploi de cette langue que je ne le suis malheureusement. Cela sera un peu pénible, mais toujours mieux que le français.

“ J’espère bientôt apprendre les noms des collaborateurs, au nombre desquels, je pense, M. Hennessy et M. Atkinson ne manqueront pas.

“ Agréez, monsieur, l’expression de mes sentiments distingués,

“ R. THURNEYSSEN.”

*From Dr. Ernst Windisch.*

“ Leipzig, 8 Februar. 1888.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I was very glad to receive your letter with the report of a proposition made by you to the Royal Irish

Academy in relation to translating Irish language manuscripts, and I sincerely wish that your good intentions may meet with best success. You know that I take a very great interest in the old Irish language and literature, though my first enthusiasm is cooled down a little by the feuds and personal attacks among the Celtic scholars. I fully agree with you that the old valuable texts of Irish literature ought to be made more accessible to the general public by trustworthy translations. I, as well as other Celtologues outside Ireland, will be ready to contribute to this aim as well as they can. But first of all, the national Irish scholars ought to apply themselves to the same work. I have no doubt that there are many things of which they have a better knowledge than foreigners. But that does not deter me to go on in my way. You say that there will be a remuneration for the translations. Will it not be a point of discontent, if money is given away to foreigners? I am now engaged with a German translation of the *Ṭáin bó CúáilṬige*, the first half of which will be ready for print, I hope, in 1889. I intended to publish it in the next part of the 'Irish Texts,' if my excellent friend, Mr. H. Hirzel, continues to print books which do not pay. I take the text of this famous story from your facsimiles of the 'Book of Leinster' and the 'Leabhar na h-Uidhri;' but I have also an independent copy of the text in the 'Book of Leinster,' copies of two fragmentary manuscripts of it which are in the British Museum, and a nearly complete copy from the 'Yellow Book of Lecan,' partly made by myself, partly made for me by others on my expense. I should be very glad to know if one of the other Dublin Manuscripts, which H. d'Arbois de Jubainville mentions in his Catalogue, contains the beginning of the whole tale, as it is in the 'Book of Leinster' (pp. 53-55), I mean especially the Stowe Manuscript, xxxii. p. 29 (d'Arbois' Catalogue, p. 214); the T.C.D. Manuscripts, H. I. 13. p. 195; H. I. 14, fol. 3 (d'Arbois' Catalogue, p. 215). The 'Yellow Book of Lecan' agrees with the 'Leabhar na h-Uidhri,' but I have no manuscript which agrees with the 'Book of Leinster.' If it was possible to get a copy of the beginning

part from the manuscripts mentioned, this might prove a great help.

“I have also nearly finished an edition and translation of the ‘Cophur in da Mucceda’ from the manuscripts mentioned in d’Arbois’ Catalogue, p. 98, and the same of the *Ἐπίθρησις* *Ἐπιθρησις* from the manuscripts mentioned in d’Arbois’ Catalogue, p. 213; both are smaller stories belonging to the *remscéla* of the great *Ἐπίθρησις*, some of which I have already tried to translate. This is what I intended to do, besides a translation of the *Fled Bhréirend* and some other texts published in my book, ‘Irische Texte,’ and besides a supplement to my Wörterbuch, meant as a help to further studies, but not as a complete Dictionary of the Language. In spite of the shortcomings of my work, I venture to think that it was, and will be, of some use, for it is always of use to see how a predecessor got on. I pray you to excuse my saying so much about plans of mine. But I see no other way for giving you a substantial answer on the letter with which you were kind enough to favour me. If there is any way in which I may be of some use to you or to your plans, it will give me always great pleasure to be at your service. I sent the letter you enclosed to my young friend, Dr. Schirmer. I am, Sir, with best compliments,

“Yours very truly,

“ERNST WINDISCH.”

*From Dr. Robert Atkinson.*

“Royal Irish Academy, 19, Dawson Street, Dublin,

“February 16, 1888.

“MY DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“The Committee having met yesterday, asked me to beg of you to be kind enough to help them to form a judgment by laying before them a statement of your views as to the translations, etc., desired by your motion. Perhaps the enclosed resolution they passed will be the clearest way I can lay it before you.

“Yours faithfully,

“ROBERT ATKINSON.



*"Copy of Resolution.*

"That Mr. Gilbert be requested to furnish to the Committee a detailed statement of his views with respect to the procuring and publishing of translations of the books issued in facsimile by the Academy, before Saturday next."

*From Dr. G. Schirmer.*

"46, Ranstaedter Steinweg, Leipzig,  
" Febr. 20th, 1888.

"DEAR SIR,

"Excuse me that I did not answer your letter earlier, but Prof. Windisch, not knowing my address, could forward your paper to me only to-day. Now I must say that I feel very much flattered by your kind proposition, and you may be sure therefore that it will do me great pleasure to support the fine and useful undertaking of the R.I.A. as far as it is in my power.

"Believe me, dear Sir,

"Yours most obediently,

"G. SCHIRMER."

*From Dr. Whitley Stokes.*

"19, Grenville Place, London, S.W.,  
" March 23, 1888.

"MY DEAR MR. GILBERT,

"Thanks for letting me see the Report, which I return.

"As matters have gone so far, my advice, if you want it, is to let Dr. Atkinson finish the work. The glossary will, at all events, be useful as an index, and it will be very desirable to have two more volumes of laws in print, whatever may be their inaccuracies and omissions. As to the third subject of your letter, the translation of parts of the manuscripts of which the Academy has published facsimiles, the more I think of this the more I am convinced that the wisest thing

to do would be to postpone the execution of the scheme until photographic facsimiles of the 'Book of Lecan' and the 'Yellow Book of Lecan' have been made available to scholars. All the Mediæval Irish Manuscripts—from 'Leabhar na h'Uidri' down—are more or less corrupt, and it is impossible to edit any text with accuracy and confidence unless it has at least two independent copies to work from. I feel this so strongly that I should positively refuse to take part in any scheme of translations if (as is unlikely) the Academy should ask me to help.

"Yours very truly,

"WHITLEY STOKES."

*From Prof. H. d'Arbois de Jubainville.*

"Paris, le 30 mars, 1888.

"CHER MONSIEUR,

"Vous m'avez fait grand plaisir en m'apprenant la nouvelle que vous me donnez. Je serai toujours reconnaissant de vos bontés pour moi pendant mon séjour à Dublin, il y a sept ans. J'ai été alors fort heureux de trouver en vous un véritable savant en même temps qu'un homme aussi bienveillant pour moi.

"Je me remercie beaucoup des offres de service que vous me faites. Tout ce que je désire est d'être tenu au courant des travaux qui se font en Irlande sur l'irlandais. Je me suis procuré le *Book of Ballymote* que j'ai acheté pour moi ; j'en ai fait acheter un par le Collège de France pour le bibliothèque. J'ai donné des ordres pour qu'on me fit revenir le tome I des *Annales d'Ulster*, qui m'arrivera de Londres au premier jour. Atkinson m'a envoyé ses *Todd Lectures*. J'en ai rendu compte dans la *Revue Celtique*. J'ignore s'il a été satisfait de mon compte rendu. Naturellement il ne vous a pas mis dans sa confiance.

"Je ne pense pas profiter pour moi de votre projet relativement aux textes irlandais. Je ne sais pas assez d'anglais pour traduire en anglais un texte irlandais, et les travaux que j'ai entrepris ne me laissent pas de loisir.

“ 1° J’ai commencé une traduction en français du *Senchus Mór* avec commentaire. 2° J’explique à mes élèves les textes édités par Windisch, et je leur fait publier des traductions de ces textes en français. Un de ces textes est dans le dernier n°. de la *Revue Celtique*, les autres ont paru ailleurs. 3° Enfin je refais la grammaire celtique dans l’ordre, et suivant le système de Brugmann: *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik* 1886.

“ Je n’ai donc le temps de rien faire de plus sauf la *Revue Celtique*.

“ Votre bien dévoué,

“ H. D’ARBOIS DE JUBAINVILLE.”

*From the Same.*

“ 84, Boulevard Montparnasse, Paris, le 26 janvier, 1889.

“ CHER MONSIEUR,

“ Dans la prochaine livraison de la *Revue Celtique*, je parle de la polémique qui s’est fait entre M. Whitley Stokes et le Rév. B. MacCarthy dans le journal l’*Academy*. Je crains que mes amis de Dublin ne blâment l’attitude que j’ai prise. J’ai agi selon ma conscience.

“ Le Rév. B. MacCarthy est un homme très distingué qui a fait d’excellentes choses et qui, s’il continue, fera mieux encore. Il sait beaucoup d’irlandais ancien, mais plus encore d’irlandais moderne, et il a besoin d’étudier encore un peu la grammaire de l’irlandais ancien.

“ Je suis étonné que vous n’ayez pas eu l’idée d’entreprendre avec lui une nouvelle édition des *Annales de Tigernach*. La plus grande partie de cet intéressant document qui devrait être publié en entier sans exception de ce qui a rapport à l’histoire ancienne, n’offrirait pour vous aucune difficulté puisque c’est un texte latin et que personne n’est mieux préparé que vous à en être éditeur. Quant à la partie irlandaise, celle qui a été la plus mal traitée par O’Conor, elle offre très peu de difficultés, puisque les mêmes formules s’y

répètent à satiété, et qu'on trouve à peu près l'équivalent dans les *Annales d'Ulster*. S'il pouvait vous être agréable que je revisse les épreuves, je me mettrais à votre entière disposition. Mais, avec le concours du Réverend B. MacCarthy, vous n'aviez aucun besoin de moi. Les *Annales de Tigernach* sont un des monuments les plus importants du haut moyen âge.

“J'ai appris avec un grand regret, la mort de ce pauvre Hennessy, qui est une très grande perte.

“J'ai appris ces jours ci que la Bibliothèque nationale possède un exemplaire de la reproduction lithographique des manuscrits des lois de brehons copiés par O'Donovan et O'Curry. Je vais m'amuser à comparer à cette copie certains passages de l'édition qui sont particulièrement curieux par les sottises qu'ils renferment.

“Croyez-moi votre bien dévoué,

“H. D'ARBOIS DE JUBAINVILLE.”

Dr. W. K. Sullivan, then in declining health, wrote in January, 1888—

“I was astonished when I saw in the *Freeman* that Dr. M'Carthy was Todd Professor. How did it happen? What is to become of the great Irish Dictionary? I think your suggestion about spending the £400, a year, a most excellent one—worthy of the Academy, which by adopting it would set a noble example of liberality. This proposal, if carried out, would do more for Celtic literature in ten years than the present jobbing system would do in a century. I should heartily support such a proposal if I could be present on the 23rd, but I have not been out of my room for five weeks. Who is the author of a 'History of the Celtic Church of Ireland'? Have you seen it? There is a wonderful ignorant blunder in it. He makes Sedulius Scotus contemporary with Charlemagne, so that he evidently never saw the works of the man, either those long known, or the numerous poems discovered within the last few years, among which are several dedicated to Irmintrude, wife of Charles the Bald!”

In March of the same year Dr. Sullivan wrote—

“I saw your notice of your plan in the *Athenæum*, and am glad to hear that it will likely be adopted. I am very anxious to see the Brehon Law Report. I want to have a question asked about the ‘Crith Gablach’ and O’Curry’s supposed translation. I think that translation should be impounded. I want also some information about the copies of the text.

“All O’Curry’s letters, among which were many from O’Donovan, were carried off by Dr. Moran to Clonliffe Seminary, where the whole of the O’Curry papers and the Catholic University Books are to be found. I think you might try and have a look at them. Some things belonging to me were also carried off. I think I have a couple of O’Donovan’s letters. I will look them up.”

It was agreed to relinquish the idea of translating the Irish texts, and to proceed with the production of photographic facsimiles. The books were reproduced by photography, with the addition of introductions and notes, and were issued by the Academy as the Royal Irish Academy Facsimiles. Gilbert was keenly interested in the presentation of these valuable manuscripts to the world—a consummation which was first and chiefly owing to his strenuous and persistent exertions.

In the subject-matter of the printed introduction to the ‘Book of Leinster’ he was much disappointed, feeling the injustice done to its contents by a lack of sympathy with the genius of the early Irish writers. Another source of regret to him was the necessity for employing Englishmen and foreigners in Ireland to assist in the work of the long projected and desired Irish Dictionary, which, after many years of labour, is not yet completed. He wished earnestly to see young Irishmen, with the learning and enthusiasm of O’Donovan and O’Curry, at work on the translation and rendering of the Irish texts. Such young students are now devoting their attention to the preservation and revival of the Irish as still spoken by the peasantry, gathering from the memories of the unlettered fresh contributions to poetry and

folk-lore, some being already equipped for the interpretation of ancient Irish writings, and seriously engaged in that scientific study which gives to their native tongue so honoured and so prominent a place in the history of language.

It were to be deplored if nothing better could be looked for in the future than thin gleams of the mystical and poetic genius of our remote ancestors, reflected from minds less sympathetic, and, by nature, colder than our own ; and, happily, Ireland already gives promise of a generation which may bring forth not unworthy followers of the great and unselfish workers of the nineteenth century. Of the important manuscript known as the "Book of Leinster," a mine of ancient Irish lore, very little of the translation has yet been accomplished.

## CHAPTER XVII

1890-1891

Marriage and Home Life.

THE year 1890 was gladdened for John Gilbert by his approaching marriage, which, though it came later than his desire, yet brought joy to the crowning years of his unselfish and laborious life. Writing of earlier days to the woman who had promised to be his wife, he said—

“That was indeed a happy time for me, but not till now have I been in a position to appeal to you for the realization of the aspirations which have never since been absent from my mind. That a period so dreadfully long should have elapsed before I could tell you what I wanted to say to you has not been my fault.”

So few of his letters remain that one or two excerpts from a sacred correspondence, reflecting his inner nature with delightful clearness and simplicity, are admitted here as illustrating the many-sided character of the man; this memoir being too largely a record of difficult work, accomplished with rigorous self-denial and determination.

“I believe that I possess two important elements for successful work; they are originality of conception and unlimited tenacity and perseverance in pursuing the objects which I decide on as deserving. But if these qualities had not been supplemented with an intense love of our country, I should never have succeeded, single-handed, in the enormous

work and mental labours by which I have lifted up the historic literature of Ireland from the degraded position into which it had been plunged by charlatanism and misrepresentation. Not the least of the many links in the chain which binds you and me together is this attachment to our native land :

“ ‘ Our own dear nation, and our name  
As Irish evermore.’ ”

“ I hope I am now telling you about things of which you said you would wish me to write to you. . . . If I have done some good for my country, I hope to do much more when I have you with me.”

“ The National Manuscripts of Ireland never would have been executed ‘ but for the energy and determination with which I carried it through amidst innumerable obstacles.’ ”

“ I am at work on the autobiography and correspondence of the first Earl of Charlemont, who was the Commander of the Irish Volunteers in 1782. The autobiography and correspondence have not hitherto been published, and are full of the most interesting matter, both in Irish politics of the time and of literary and artistic matters. It will form an octavo volume of about 500 pages, and is printed by Government in the series of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, whose representative I am in Ireland. . . . Lord Charlemont’s writings should have a great interest for people interested in the Home Rule question, but I fear that the majority of our politicians are very shallow in their knowledge of *real* Irish history, and they are frequently falling into very ridiculous errors by relying on obsolete and inaccurate publications. I should like very much to see a rational home-rule measure—of which I have always been an advocate—for Ireland, but at present there is a sad deficiency of education, and of such acquirements as would enable the people to administer successfully a government for themselves.”



“Have you seen the new Dictionary of National Biography coming out in London under the editorship of Leslie Stephen? It is to extend to 50 volumes, of which about half have already appeared. I have written a good many biographies of Irish people for it, and am now preparing some further notices. As no living people are included, neither you nor I—with all our merits!—can be given places in it. In another letter I will tell you about the works I am at present engaged on, so that you must not suppose I am very idle in this ‘still retreat.’ In fact, I have always prided myself on being a ‘working man,’ but have not taken any part in the demand for an ‘eight hours’ day.”

“I, too, had a mother who was left a widow when I was only four years old. . . . She devoted all her life to the children, of whom I was the youngest. From the time I left College the care of her was the main object of my life, and well she deserved it. To her I owed everything, and from her I believe I inherit the best qualities I possess. . . . She often told me of her happiness in the great care which my sisters and I bestowed on her.”

“I do not think I could write anything so admirable as an account of an old Irish orchard which has enchanted me. I expect to have a few old Irish apple-trees in blossom in honour of your arrival.”

“When I resign to you the management of the garden it will entail on you the responsibility in relation to the birds of every kind, including the blackbirds, to say nothing of the magpies, which have been very numerous and very busy here for some time past.”

“Your precise description of goblins is most valuable, because Edmund Burke declared that no one could form a clear idea of ghosts or goblins or such beings. So you see you have achieved what the great Burke declared could never be effected.”

“If you had come here last week you would have seen plenty of birds in my little demesne, many fine blackbirds and thrushes, and numerous robins, of great audacity, as well as a variety of miscellaneous small birds. I am glad to say that the birds here never migrate, and appear to get on very well during the winter, with a little assistance from the house. . . . There is a very handsome little squirrel,<sup>1</sup> red in colour, who pays me a visit regularly, to look after the walnuts in the large trees opposite the hall door. Last year he brought a younger one with him, and I expect to see them later on.”

“I am very glad you think of taking up the old Irish (or Celtic) legends, and there I think I can be of assistance to you. The book you mention as out of print is not regarded as satisfactory by those competent to judge. . . . Of the real ancient Irish legends very few have been translated. I will endeavour to send you some in print as soon as possible. You will, I think, be very much taken with them.”

“I send you by this post a book which contains one of the genuine old Irish tales. It is entitled ‘*Ṭṁṁ-bo-ḟṁoech.*’ You will, I think, be struck by some of the descriptive portions of it, which are distinctively Celtic. Not many of the old tales have been translated into English. Those which have been translated have been printed in various journals, mostly of a philological character, in France or Germany, chiefly intended for specialists, and little known in Great Britain or Ireland. I hope, however, to send you more of the old tales before long.”

“I am very glad you are giving the book to the artist. The other copy (‘*Ṭṁṁ-bo-ḟṁoech.*’) shall go to you as soon as possible. You have probably seen the two new pictures shortly to be exhibited, the Adoration of the Magi, and a subject from the Song of Solomon.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The squirrel was the crest of the Gilberts. Sir Humphrey Gilbert’s ship in which he sailed round the world in Elizabeth’s time was called the *Squirrel*, which added to Gilbert’s interest in the vivacious little animal.

<sup>2</sup> Burne-Jones was much interested in the Irish tale, and in his studio spoke to the present writer at length on the Celtic legends and their great riches in tempting subjects for the artist. But he confessed that he could not touch these subjects, as they would not attract the sympathies of his public.

“I am so glad you saw the pictures in the Academy so conveniently. . . . I have always thought the English school far below the French in figure painting, which is the branch that most interests me.”

“I went, as you desired, to give your love to that blackbird, but he was not to be found just then. However, quite close to the place there were two very splendid thrushes, who sang a magnificent composition of their own in two parts, which I am sure they will be happy to repeat for you. The bees and the butterflies are now coming about very busily, and seemingly satisfied that the fine weather of to-day will continue for some time. I have been thinking that perhaps the blackbird might have heard that in your ‘old Irish orchard’ you spoke of his tribe as a ‘thievish set;’ but you also included the thrushes, who do not appear to have been offended at the truth.”

“The blackbird was looking for you to-day again.”

“One of the little blue-birds came and perched on a branch near a window, and kept staring in for some time, expecting, no doubt, to see you; and when he went off, he left an impression that he will call again, when he knows you are at home to receive visitors. The united company of birds here have grand concerts every evening about seven, and I fancy I hear them performing the lullaby from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*—

“‘Never harm, nor spell, nor charm,  
Come our lovely lady nigh.’”

“The fairies must have told the birds that you were glad to hear about them, for just at the time your letter of yesterday, in which you mentioned them, was being despatched from London, another grand concert was commenced in the trees near your windows, and carried on for about an hour. Among the solo performers some blackbirds distinguished themselves above all others, inflated, no doubt, with the important position you gave to one of their tribe.”

“I have another fairy tale for you, and this time it is about trees; but I think I shall be able to tell it to you with much greater effect when you and I are walking together under the very trees to which it relates.”

“You say you miss your faëry-land; but perhaps you are not aware that the fairies are looking after you. Otherwise I could not account for what has been going on in the grounds here ever since you mentioned the time when you will be over. In the flower-plots under your windows numbers of blackbirds and thrushes come every day and strut about with unusual confidence and self-assertion, as if they were now satisfied that their friend would be soon here to cherish them. There are also several beautiful little blue-birds and robins making themselves quite at home.”

“You will not, I hope, object to the large collection of books: the library contains only a small portion of the collection. There is a room which I think you will like to have for your writing-room. It is large, lofty, and bright, and looks down on plots of flowers with flowering shrubs, and tall trees—which will not walk away.<sup>1</sup> . . . I have had a way made round the entire grounds, so that you can have a quarter of an hour’s walk whenever you like, under trees and hedges.”

“I had a very pleasant visit from Father Russell yesterday. He had not been here for a long time, and was greatly interested in many things he saw in the library way.”

*From Cardinal Manning to Mrs. J. T. Gilbert.*

“Archbishop’s House, Westminster,  
“September 18, 1891.

“MY DEAR CHILD,

“If I had known at the time the happiness on which you had entered, I would have sent a blessing to both of you, and in November I shall hope to see you.

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to a tale entitled “The Walking Trees,” written by his correspondent.

"I am sorry to hear the reason why you could not keep your word to me, and I hope that you have thrown off all effects and reminders of it.

"And I hold you to your promise about the ghost stories. I read those you sent me with much trepidation. But I am afraid that your daily cares and commonplaces will make you prosaic and earthly.

"Give my kind regards to Mr. Gilbert, and believe me

"Very truly yours,

"HENRY E. CARD. MANNING."

*From the Same.*

"Archbishop's House, Westminster,

"December 18, 1891.

"MY DEAR MR. GILBERT,

"Your most acceptable gift has reached me safely; and I look forward with great interest to read it this Christmas. I have noted the multitude of your works, not only in number, but in the solid and original matter. Our history is being rewritten; and also that of the Holy See, witness Pastor's two volumes, in which there is no respect of persons, even the highest when they fail or fall.

"With a Christmas blessing to you both, believe me always,

"Very truly yours,

"HENRY E. CARD. ARCHBP."

On May 29, 1891, John T. Gilbert married Rosa Mulholland, the second daughter of Dr. Joseph Stevenson Mulholland, of Belfast, in the county of Antrim. The old home was again full of sunshine, the neglected garden bloomed, and green walks and nooks grown desolate looked again that expression of sympathy with happy human presence which trees, hedges, and leafy lanes can assume.

After this date the man seemed to grow younger instead of older; the storm and stress of life were over, the clouds

of misfortune were dispersed, and there remained for him sweetness and peace. Friends came to Villa Nova sure of a genial welcome, which was more particularly given to those who could appreciate the rare treasures of his library and his engraved portraits of celebrated men and women; but he loved his Arcadian retirement, and rarely went from home, except to the Royal Irish Academy, National Library, Royal Dublin Society, or elsewhere, for reasons connected with his work, which might be described as never-ceasing but that it was relieved by so many cheery intervals of enjoyment, odd hours and half-hours of holiday-making, spent in playful conversation, or roaming about his garden as gladly as a boy let loose from school.

He had in him the unspoiled freshness of nature which is a fount of perpetual youth. The return of spring to the green spot he called his "little demesne," the change of leaf that irradiated it with autumnal splendour, the flutter of the song-birds at his window, looking to him as their Providence when the frost threatened them with hunger and the wreckage of scarlet holly-berries from which they had wrung their last sustenance stained the snow,—all these were happenings of the keenest interest to him.

When deep in his work over some forbidding-looking parchment, he would suddenly spring up, throw on his cap, call to one, always near, to follow, and was away across the lawns, or through the dark lime-tree walk, or to the little tarn, formed by a stream from the mountain, which cuts its bright way through many a mile to run along the foot of the Villa Nova meadow towards the sea. In this shady little tarn a water-hen and her brood would sometimes be found, sailing on the water, or lurking together under the lush grass and ferns on one or other of the banks, and in this little feathered family he took a lively interest.

The little demesne contained much variety of feature, considering its modest dimensions. From the water-hen's haunt he could turn at once into the long walk between giant limes, dim and solemn as a cathedral aisle, and



VILLA NOVA. GARDEN VIEW.





carpeted with moss, called the Goblin Walk because its darkness was in summer pierced with little arrows of sunshine darting about like living things, and was often musical with a mysterious orchestra of invisible flies, in pauses of the song of thrush and blackbird, or before the noisy wrangles of the magpies and squirrels over their provender of the walnuts had begun. Through this favourite alley he could pass on to what was known as the Orchard Angle, where the apples had been, time out of mind, the prey of the small boys of the neighbourhood, and where too careful a closing of holes in the hedge would have been looked on by the depredators as meanness unworthy of a Gilbert.

"I robbed the Villa Nova orchard when I was fifteen," said an elderly man, when the old gardener was grumbling. "I was brought for it before the Miss Gilberts by the policeman. They were only very young themselves, indeed, and all they said was, to ask me my catechism!" This same youth of fifteen had drilled with the Fenians in a Wicklow glen, and is now a steady industrious father of a family, and a prominent helper of all lawful reforms in the neighbourhood.

In the hay-making season the meadow afforded much amusement to Gilbert, when the long grass began to take the colour of the sun, and tentative purchasers would come hovering about to have a look at it. Gilbert delighted in the humours of the situation, and would go out himself to parley with the bargainers.

"Yes, sir, it's gorgeous grass, but it's *wake*. This is grass, now, that would be grand entirely for cows; but ye see I'm a man that has horses!"

Thus the first purchaser. But a second had a different story—

"I don't deny, sir, that it's a grass that's good for its own purpose; but it's coarse and strong, and only fit for horses. And I must tell ye that *my* business is cows!"

"Well, now, as it's good for neither cows nor horses," said Gilbert, "what would you advise me to do with it?"

"Faith, sir, I think you'd better ate it yourself!"

Which rather startling counsel only meant that the master was at liberty to put his "own bastes on it."

Though enjoying such humours, he disliked the conventional representation of the Irishman as a buffoon. Ready wit delighted him, and he never lost an opportunity of drawing it forth. The carman, the gardener, the road-scraper, the man with a hod of mortar, all, when they came in his way, afforded him entertainment, and he was a favourite with their class. But though loving the geniality, he saw behind it the shrewd good sense and the keen understanding. To have workmen engaged in his house was a treat to Gilbert. He was the happier for a chat with the painter or the plumber, so that the bursting of a water-pipe at Villa Nova was not such an unmitigated calamity as in ordinary households.

Flowers in the little demesne do not always confine themselves to beds allotted to them, but have been known to migrate on the wings of the birds or winds to lawn or meadow or bank of stream—an anemone starting a whole colony of sky-blue creatures in the spring grass, or a peony rising unexpectedly in its crimson where one would not have looked for it. Roses form themselves unbidden into hedges. "That ould 'mask (damask) bates creation!" says the ancient gardener, whose humours would fill a little book of themselves. One of his fancies is connected with a long low mound which rises under the shade of a richly dark velvety-branched yew tree. The mound is probably caused by the roots of the tree, but the old man is convinced that this is the grave of Saint Thomas of Villanova, and every spring he watches with interest the blooming of a large cluster of tulips which nobody ever planted, yet which rise unaccountably, year after year, from the foot of the tree, to crown the mossy mound with their long delicate cups, tinted with celestial rose-pink. The world is so small to this old gardener that the existence of Spain is no more to him than a superstition. He cannot be induced to believe in two Villa Novas, and holds that it

is good to live where the saints have trod, and to be near the places where they lie!

Animals loved Gilbert's companionship, and he was a close observer of their habits. Cats, with their mysterious ways and solemn looks, amused him. Seeing one of them blinking at the fire, apparently rapt in uncanny memories, he would say, "Does she not look as if the spirit of some wicked enchantress of eld had got a habitation in her?" A great old cat, who as a kitten had lived on very familiar terms with him (a ball and string lay in his waste-paper basket for her occasional amusement), continued to claim his attentions long after the duties of mousing had begun to occupy her. She would sit at the library fire every evening from nine till ten o'clock, when a maid would come to seize and dispose of her for the night, treatment at which her pride rebelled. Perceiving her chagrin, the master thought to save her feelings, and one evening conveyed her himself to the servant's care before the hour of forcible arrest had arrived. "She's afraid of me, sir," said the maid as she received the animal from his arms. "Perhaps she has reason," said the master in a tone of mild reproach. Gilbert declared that from this time forth the cat watched the clock above his desk, and at three minutes to ten, rather than disturb him again, she got up and quitted the library with dignity.

But birds attracted his sympathy perhaps more than any other of the lower creatures, in their nest-building, provendering, and their tuneful woodings and domestic arrangements. He was much pleased when one spring a family of young starlings was discovered located under the eaves above his bedroom window, the discovery being made by the arrival of the father starling one morning, with a large worm wriggling in his beak, provision for the family breakfast. A ladder was put up to the roof, the nest was discovered, and carefully guarded from the observation of cats. A grove of evergreens in the grounds was held sacred to the blackbirds and thrushes, and, by Gilbert's request, little frequented by

human intruders, lest the birds should be scared, and cease to look on it as their particular stronghold. He would leave the breakfast-table to scatter supplies on the grass under a window known for hospitality to the feathered friends, and would stand behind the curtain to see them enjoy their meal undisturbed. A large settlement of magpies, located in a group of maples and sycamores, was very interesting to him, and when at a certain hour of the morning they made a loud clamour, he said they were holding a parliament. He admired them strutting about the lawn, feathered courtiers in their black velvet coats and snow-white vests and leggings. One morning a gold kingfisher appeared perching on a wild-rose bramble above the meadow stream, which caused him much delight ; but this was only once in a way.

Next to the birds the squirrels held place in his affections, and their arrival in season "to look after the walnuts" of the two huge old walnut trees on the lawn always made a little sensation in the house. They were even less afraid of the master than were the birds, and would sit quite near the hall door gnawing their nuts, and laying up the stores which they leisurely carried away to deposit in their holes in the more distant tree-trunks. Even a mouse was not beneath his sympathies. It happened once that a bowl of sugar was left in his bedroom at night, and a mouse, having become aware of so interesting a fact, was overheard in the small hours paying busy attention to it. The bowl was removed, but Gilbert was too hospitable to endure the disappointment of the tiny creature, and, carefully placing a lump of sugar on the spot where the bowl had been, went to bed in pleased expectation of the result, nor fell asleep till a sound of scraping from the corner of the room assured him that the little guest had arrived and was enjoying his supper. No one could venture to kill an insect in his presence, and he would leave his book to pilot a wasp, out of reach of murderous hands, through the open window.

In the book-room, a smaller overflow library, which was in later years the favourite sitting-room of Gilbert and his

wife, the evenings were usually spent, his chosen seat a great armchair, which had a special association of its own, having been rescued from the burning of the old family house at Brannickstown. Work alternated with playful talk or the reading aloud of something imaginative or humorous, as different as possible from the historic "document." The fiction based on everyday life did not greatly attract him. Passing from the search for absolute fact, he loved the play of wit, or the speculations of fancy.

During these latter years, though a great number of his early comrades in work had passed away, yet he had very many friends, at home and abroad, whose lasting affection and regard were prized by him. Among those who came and went about the charmed enclosure of the "little demesne" of Villa Nova in the years of the nineties, were Lord Russell of Killowen, and Judge Mulholland, their wives and families, and other relatives of Gilbert's wife; Father Matthew Russell, S.J.; Dr. George Atkinson and Mrs. Atkinson; Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Arnold; Sir John and Lady Banks; Sir Richard and Lady Martin; Dr. Samuel R. Gardiner; Mr. and Mrs. John Dillon; Dr. Brendan MacCarthy; the daughters of Professor W. K. Sullivan; Mrs. Lyons; General Sir Martin Dillon; friends indeed far too many to be enumerated. Sunday was Gilbert's holiday, and on the afternoon of that day he delighted to welcome all who would undertake a long walk to enter at the green jasmine-covered wicket, rest under the great walnut trees, and gather round the afternoon tea-table.

## CHAPTER XVIII

1890-1897

Literary Activity—Additions to Library—Books and Manuscripts—Royal University of Ireland—Knighthood—Letters.

HE had now, as ever, a number of different undertakings on hand at one and the same time: his Reports on the Charlemont Papers, the Ormonde Manuscripts, and others; the inspection of, and preparation of reports upon, various manuscripts of Irish historic interest, such as the Franciscan Manuscripts, and the Galway Manuscripts. Seven large volumes of the Calendar of the Ancient Records of Dublin were fruits of his labour in these years, which also produced, in a series entitled "Historic Literature of Ireland," four separate works: "A Jacobite Narrative of the War in Ireland, 1688-1691" (published 1892), "Documents Relating to Ireland, 1795-1804" (published 1893), "Narratives of the Detention, Liberation, and Marriage of Maria Clementina Stuart, styled Queen of Great Britain and Ireland" (published 1894), and "Crede Mihi: the Most Ancient Register Book of the Archbishops of Dublin before the Reformation" (published 1897). The mechanical workmanship, so to speak, of these books was done in Dublin. He held it as a principle to employ his own people in his native city, and acted on it scrupulously through many years. With one exception, all his works were printed and published in Dublin, the only portions executed in London being the autotype reproductions of the rare portraits for which he sought zealously to add to the historic completeness of each book. In all cases the edition was limited, and issued only to subscribers. A

portion of the "History of Dublin" in one volume, entitled "An Account of the Parliament House, Dublin, with Notices of Parliaments held There, 1661-1800," was published by him in 1896.

For many years he had been gathering materials with a view to the publication of a complete work on Irish Bibliography, including not only books published in Ireland at all times, but also those written and published on the continent by Irishmen during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Beginning this work in 1896-7, he read papers<sup>1</sup> on Irish Bibliography before the Royal Irish Academy, indicating the motive and plan of an undertaking which he did not live to carry out.

Though so full of work, he never seemed overwhelmed with business. "My work is my pleasure," he would say. His wonderfully clear and accurate memory, his extraordinary eyesight which never became impaired, his vivid interest in each fresh undertaking, his calm, equable temperament and sunny good-humour, all contributed to make his labours appear to others as well as to himself no more than congenial occupation for his powerful energies. He had no hard-and-fast rules for work. If the weather were fine, he was ready to enjoy the open air and the sunshine, but he did not love to move very far from home, liking to be within easy reach of libraries, printers, and documents. His last visit to England was in 1891, when he stayed with his wife in the house of her brother-in-law, Sir Charles Russell, afterwards Lord Russell of Killowen. After that there was an occasional week spent with his wife in the lovely neighbourhood of Rostrevor, County Down, and now and again a day at Carton with the Duke of Leinster, or at Kilkenny Castle. For the rest his time was passed between his house of Villa Nova and his various places of interest in Dublin: the Royal Irish Academy, of which he was vice-president and honorary

<sup>1</sup> These papers, accompanied by facsimiles of a few of the old title-pages with which the projected book was to have been illustrated, have been printed in the *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*; the papers will be found in the Appendix of the present volume.

librarian, having the responsible care of the valuable books and ancient manuscripts deposited in the library, as well as the congenial office of selecting and purchasing additions to the collection; the National Library, of which he was one of the four trustees; the National Gallery, in which he took a keen interest as one of its governors; and the Royal Hibernian Academy of Arts, connected with which he held an honorary professorship.

A great disappointment to him was the continued refusal of Government to complete the publication of the *Chartularies of the two great Abbeys of Dublin*. In 1884 "*St. Mary's Abbey*," in two volumes, had been published in the *Master of the Rolls' Series*, or "*Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland*," and the "*Abbey of St. Thomas*" was prepared by Gilbert to follow and complete a unique and important Record; but the grant for Ireland having been withdrawn, he had the mortification of seeing the fruit of his labour and desire remaining unused, as it is at the present moment, completed and ready for the press.

To the last, one of his deepest interests centred in the *Royal Irish Academy*, in the councils of which he had held an important position through long years, and where he had many friends. On two occasions during these latter years he put aside a proposal to elect him as President of the *Royal Irish Academy*, preferring his post as honorary librarian, for its intimate connection with the books and manuscripts, and the greater leisure it afforded him to pursue his own ideal labours. His solicitude for the maintenance of a national Irish character in the Institution, for the development, through its instrumentality, of a true knowledge and appreciation of the treasure of ancient Irish writings preserved therein as foundation for a noble Irish literature in the future, never flagged till his very latest moment. He deplored the fact that some of his friends deviated from the intention of Lord Charlemont by substituting largely the pursuit of general science for more national aims and objects. In this he had, happily, some sympathizers and followers, men who still live



and strive to uphold the main original purpose of the illustrious founder of the Institution.

The continual addition to his own library was another source of enjoyment, and many a volume travelled from Quaritch and other London booksellers to Villa Nova, merely for his inspection with option to purchase. His choice was made with a view to his work ; he was ever on the watch for manuscripts or rare books which might contain something helpful to research, and the numerous book-catalogues in various languages dropped into his letter-box morning and evening were carefully scanned and marked with his pencil on the moment of arrival. Even in his boyhood he had begun to collect books. A note remains written by him at the age of nineteen, asking a friend to come and look at two hundred volumes which he intended sending to Jones, the auctioneer, for the purpose of making room for others.

Having persevered through so many years in his efforts to secure *manuscripts* relating to Ireland for the purposes of his own research and historical work, his library, now in possession of the Corporation of Dublin, contains a large number of manuscripts of importance, collected with care and discrimination, and forming valuable materials for future historians of the three kingdoms, and especially of writers of the histories of Dublin and of Ireland. In like manner his collection of *books* was made after great reading and persistent research, his prime object being to bring together the works of Irishmen printed in Dublin or on the Continent ; thus accumulating a treasure of national lore in writing and in print. Indeed, the special collection, in which he had the dearest interest, included those works of Irishmen who, while living in enforced exile, wrote contemporary history, often in the Latin language, and under curious titles, to escape the eye of the enemy, at a period when it was asserted and believed that Irishmen were in a state of savagery, incapable of education and unworthy of being treated as human beings.

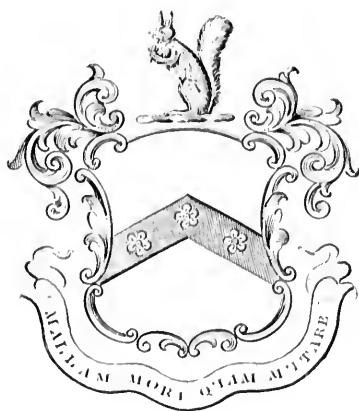
Though the portion of his library which he valued most

highly consisted of the books and manuscripts bearing on the historical work he had so deeply at heart, yet it contained very many noble works of general literature; a large number of the latter showing, indeed, on examination, some connecting-link with Ireland. His choicest copy of Milton was a unique edition in rare and beautiful binding of Dublin eighteenth-century workmanship,<sup>1</sup> and Lodge's "Portraits" contains the pictured presentments of Irishmen or of men whose fortunes were associated with the Irish at home or abroad.

As his library accommodation was not unlimited, exchanges had occasionally to be made. It would be difficult to guess the number of the books which, during upwards of fifty years, must have passed into his possession, besides those which remained to the last on his library shelves. Considering his moderate financial resources, his expenditure on books and manuscripts was enormous. Comparatively few books were bought for mere pride of possession. Every one was carefully read by him, and many will be found marked with his pencil throughout in the neat, graceful writing which illuminated, but never disfigured, the pages; or with slips of pencilled paper between the leaves, valuable comment, or added information for the student who may follow on his lead through the volume. His memory of what he read was unailing, and he could at any moment put his hand on a book and turn to a passage that might be wanted. A learned friend says, "It was a pleasure to see him in a muniment-room or a choice library; his very manner of handling a volume showed the joy of the genuine book-lover."

Among his private papers and manuscripts remain a large number of note-books, and special collections which were begun at a very early period of his literary life, his habit being to take notes from every available source, and afterwards to use them as occasion arose. These note-books are filled with materials gathered in the course of his busy

<sup>1</sup> Exhibited with other choice bindings from the Gilbert Library at the Arts and Crafts Exhibitions of 1895 and 1899.



*J. C. Gilbert.*  
*Dublin!*  
MDCCL.





life from the libraries of Ireland, England, and the Continent: notably Trinity College, Royal Irish Academy, Royal Dublin Society, Marsh's, King's Inns, and Record Office, Dublin; British Museum, Lambeth, and Record Office, London; Bodleian Library, Oxford, Cambridge, and the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. In a word, wherever information was to be found concerning Ireland he spared no pains, no means, to get access to and obtain it.

Even before his nineteenth year, when Samuel Bindon, antiquarian of Limerick, wrote to him, "I regard your discovery of Preston's portrait as a very precious find," he was zealous in searching for the portraits of Irishmen or of notable persons connected with Ireland, and from time to time added to his store specimens in line or mezzotint by celebrated engravers who were Irishmen by birth, his idea in this being to form a collection which would represent a history of engraving in Ireland. To these were added impressions of rare old prints of ancient buildings of Dublin no more to be seen, and of scenery in and around the city, keeping in mind their value as illustrating various periods of our social and political life, and using them to enhance the value of his historical works. His collection in this kind includes some sketches, and even woodcuts, treasured merely as preserving features of which, presumably, in the course of time, no other presentment would be found. He watched the sales' catalogues for records of this nature as well as for books and manuscripts. One evening he found in such a list the announcement, as for sale, of an original portrait of Robert Emmet. Gilbert telegraphed to the advertiser instantly, and the portrait came to his hands with a note from the bookseller, saying, "I see you have got something remarkable, for your telegram was followed by others from different quarters, and also many letters inquiring about the portrait."

This drawing of Robert Emmet is distinguished by its interesting unlikeness to the large, heavy man of middle age, commonly taken to represent the youthful patriot, whose

countenance was invented from the plaster cast made after the young hero's execution. The sketch secured by Gilbert is in pencil touched with colour, a delicate vignette of head and shoulders, showing a youthful face with an expression of almost petulance, though the loose, impatient lock of fair hair hangs over strong and thoughtful brows. Gilbert made efforts to trace the origin and history of the portrait, which is signed with the initials "A. Robertson" in the corner; and with the object of ascertaining whether or not the artist was the well-known miniature painter, Andrew Robertson, popular in London about the year 1797, he entered into correspondence on the subject with the daughter of the painter, Miss Emily Robertson. Gilbert thought it probable that Emmet had sat for the sketch when in London on his way to or from the prison of Thomas Addis Emmet, whom he visited during the period of his confinement. Miss Robertson, however, thought she had reasons for believing that the portrait was not the work of her father.

During the course of these years of the nineties two compliments were publicly paid to Gilbert, intended as a recognition of his lifelong labours, and their object and results. The Royal University conferred on him their honorary degree of Doctor of Laws (1892), and he was knighted by the then Lord Lieutenant, the Earl of Cadogan (1897). Though gratified by these marks of favour, Gilbert placed little value on personal honours. His mind was ever fixed on his own high ideal, his only desire being the accomplishment of as much work for his country as was possible to him while life remained—a desire to which Providence accorded a generous fulfilment.

*From Dr. S. R. Gardiner.*

"South View, Widmore Road, Bromley, Kent,

"August 1, 1890.

"DEAR MR. GILBERT,

"It will give us both great pleasure to see something of you; and we readily accept your hospitality, though

our mode of travelling prevents us from bringing with us dress-clothes. We hope to cross by the mail which arrives at Kingstown at 5.3 on Thursday morning, and will take the next train on.

“Believe me, yours sincerely,  
“SAMUEL R. GARDINER.”

*From Right Rev. Mgr. Bernard O'Reilly.*

“Paris, 3 rue des Bassins, May 19, 1890.

“Do you still propose to publish a translation of the Rinuccini Papers? They would be a most welcome and timely contribution to the national history. I still fancy I can see the bound volumes of the precious manuscript where you showed them to me amid all your other treasures at Villa Nova.

“May the fates be propitious to you, and spare you length of days, strength of body, peace of mind, and that contentment of heart you so richly deserve after a life wholly devoted to the service of Erin!

“My sister (Mrs. White) and myself often speak of you, and your angelic sister now with God,—as we saw you on the day so well remembered. . . . I am afraid our chances of ever again visiting Ireland are very small. Who knows but some good fortune will send you to New York? The Greater Ireland has good reason to honour, admire, and love you. And you would not be among strangers in the metropolis of the New World.

“At all events, you must count both of us among your devoted friends whom time and distance cannot separate from you.”

*From Denny Lane.*

“Cork, February 12, 1892.

“MY DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“A friend of mine has got into great archæological trouble. He is a sea-captain, and some time since his vessel

had a cargo for Fowey in Cornwall. While examining the place he found that the church, a very old one, was dedicated to St. Finn Barr. Whereat he was much moved, and, only that he is a religious man, would have exclaimed of that good patron saint of Cork, 'Que diable veut-il dans cette galère?'

"Could you or any of your learned colleagues find out if Saint Finn Barr was ever in Cornwall?"

"Some time since I had a Latin life of the saint edited by my friend Caulfield, but I cannot find it.

"With kind regards, I remain truly yours,

"DENNY LANE."

*From Lord Powerscourt.*

"Powerscourt, Enniskerry,

"February 26, 1892.

"MY DEAR GILBERT,

"I know you take a great interest in the National Gallery, and therefore will feel very much the loss of our friend, Henry Doyle. I felt it most keenly, as an old friend, as well as in his capacity as Director. We have now to consider his successor. . . . I am afraid we shall never get the equal of Henry Doyle. I think we do not want a painter, as such, but an expert in pictures. Lawless knows art well, has studied it at Rome and elsewhere, knows a good deal about old pictures, has great opportunities, from his familiarity with society in London, for gaining information as to sales, etc., and also of obtaining donations, speaks German, French, and Italian fluently, knows all the first people at Rome, and such people as the Dufferins, etc., our ambassadors at foreign courts, and would be a welcome person in classes where he would have every chance of getting works for the Gallery which would not be sold through dealers.

"What do you think? It is proposed, I believe, to have a meeting of the Governors at the Gallery on Thursday week, March 10, at 3 p.m., to elect. Lord Zetland told me it is for



the Governors to elect, and he confirms the decision. . . . I think if we could get Lawless we should do well.

“Yours very sincerely,  
“POWERSCOURT.”

*From Dr. S. R. Gardiner.*

“March 10, 1892.

“DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“May I add two particular queries to my general one sent the other day?

“Warner (ii. 451) says that Ormond’s treaty with O’Neill was brought to nothing by the refusal of the commissioners of trust to accept O’Neill’s terms. In the same page he speaks of Sir C. Coote’s profession that he would desert Parliament if it wronged the King.

“Can you tell me on what evidence these two statements are based? Warner gives, of course, no references whatever.

“Believe me, yours sincerely,  
“SAMUEL R. GARDINER.”

On the back of this letter is Gilbert’s pencilled note—

“See ‘Hist. Confederation,’ vii. p. 121.

“‘Contemp. Hist.’ vol. ii. p. 300.

“Preface, p. xxxv.”

*From the Same.*

“June 14, 1892.

“DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“Thank you for your information. I had not heard of the Municipal Records, and will ask for them at the Museum.

“I expect I shall run over some day in August to look at Drogheda, and will then ask you if you know any one there to guide me about.

“Yours sincerely,  
“SAMUEL R. GARDINER.”

*From the Same.*

“Holyhead, August 1, 1892.

“MY DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“I have delayed my thanks to you for ‘Teeroghan’ till I could give some account of my arrangements. You see I am approaching Ireland. Mrs. Gardiner and I had thought of coming over with the tricycle again, but we have so little time that I think it will end in my coming alone for two or three days to see Rathmines and Drogheda.

“If so, I shall be very pleased to accept your hospitality, and to have the pleasure of talking with you. I cannot yet tell the time, but it will probably be between the 15th and the 24th.

“Believe me, yours sincerely,

“SAMUEL R. GARDINER.”

*From the Same.*

“October 6, 1892.

“DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“Can you tell me anything of Johnston’s ‘History of Drogheda’? A passage is quoted in Moran’s ‘Life of Plunket.’ It is not very accurate, but it contains a statement that Cromwell tried to blow up St. Peter’s by introducing powder into a subterranean passage. This agrees fairly with a statement in a pamphlet by Dr. Bernard, which I have seen, and is important as bearing on the correctness of Thomas Wood’s story. I cannot find Johnston’s book in the Museum library. It would be useful to know when it was written, and whether the author had knowledge of the construction of the original St. Peter’s. Perhaps Moran did not spell his name rightly. If you know the book, and can give me the author’s Christian name and date, it might help me to trace it. Can you also tell me where Murphy got his map of Drogheda? I suspect he cooked it. It looks like a modern map with a town wall stuck in.

“Pray remember me to Mrs. Gilbert.

“Believe me, yours sincerely,

“SAMUEL R. GARDINER.”

*From Sidney Webb.*

“116, Lower Baggot Street, Dublin,

“July 29, 1892.

“DEAR DR. GILBERT,

“Farrell, who was Chief Constable of Dublin, gave evidence before the Select Committee on Artisans and Machinery, in 1824, that fifteen or sixteen trades in Dublin formed the Board of Green Cloth, a general union which administered secret oaths, and intimidated men and masters. This is what I mentioned to you. If anything should occur to you in connection with the enigmatical ‘Board,’ would you kindly jot it down for me?

“Yours truly,

“SIDNEY WEBB.”

*From Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice.*

“Leigh House, Bradford-on-Avon,

“August 8, 1892.

“DEAR DR. JOHN GILBERT,

“I am much obliged for your kind reply to my letter. What the late W. W. H. Hardinge wrote is familiar to me. His work is most valuable and accurate. I notice that on some points his views and those of Sir T. Larcom, in the notes to his edition of the ‘Down Survey,’ are not identical in regard to the relations of the ‘Grosse,’ to the ‘Civill,’ and the ‘Down’ surveys.

“On the whole, W. Hardinge’s views would seem to be the more correct, as far as I can make out.

“In the British Museum I have found the manuscript of the ‘Speculum Hiberniæ,’ written very late in life (1686) by Petty. The notes of it are at Bowood, and a rough draft. I believe this has never been published.

“In regard to the report to the Irish Council on the Down Survey, there are, at Bowood, two manuscripts—  
1. ‘An Account of the Contract for surveying the Commonwealth Lands in Ireland.’ (This is complete, though I think

only a draft.) 2. 'An Account of the Distribution.' It begins, 'When the rebellion of Ireland was appeased,' and ends, '24. Whether the agents shall be sent for.' (This is the last of a series of queries numbered 1 to 24.) This also is a draft only, a good deal corrected, and, I think, incomplete.

"I have made very good progress with my work, and hope to bring it out (D.V.) in 1894.

"I am, dear Dr. Gilbert,

"Yours truly,

"EDMOND FITZMAURICE."

*From Sir E. Maunde Thompson.*

"British Museum, London, October 31, 1892.

"MY DEAR GILBERT,

"Many thanks for the paper. I always rejoice to hear of your welfare, and congratulate you heartily on your new honours.

"Yours sincerely,

"E. MAUNDE THOMPSON."

*From J. J. Cartwright.*

"Rolls House, London, October 31, 1892.

"DEAR DR. GILBERT,

"I write to offer my heartiest congratulations on the distinguished honours conferred upon you by the Royal University of Ireland, the particulars of which I have been reading in the *Irish Times* received from you this morning. Mr. Maxwell Lyte is still abroad, otherwise he would, I am sure, join with me in these felicitations; and the Manuscripts Commissioners generally will also be gratified with the mark of distinction given to one who has worked with them so long and so faithfully.

"I remain, always yours truly,

"J. J. CARTWRIGHT."

*From Lord Arthur Butler.*

“ 21, Park Lane, London, October 31, 1892.

“ DEAR DR. GILBERT,

“ I was so glad to see an account of the honours which have been bestowed on you—the LL.D. degree, and the seat in the Senate. I am so glad to be able to congratulate you most heartily on your well-earned distinctions, which, I am sure, cannot but be sources of satisfaction to yourself.

“ Yours very truly,

“ ARTHUR BUTLER.”

*From Sidney Lee, LL.D.*

“ ‘ Dictionary of National Biography,’

“ 15, Waterloo Place, London,

“ November 1, 1892.

“ DEAR DR. GILBERT,

“ Permit me to offer you my very warm congratulations on the honour which has been so deservedly awarded to you.

“ Yours very truly,

“ SIDNEY LEE.”

*From Rev. W. D. Macray, LL.D.*

“ Ducklington Rectory, Witney,

“ November 2, 1892.

“ MY DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“ I congratulate you most heartily on the so well deserved recognition of your long work on the national history of Ireland by the Royal University of Ireland. There can only be one opinion of its being a worthy distinction worthily gained. It is well that there are still some few Irish matters on which all can be of one mind ! I mentioned it yesterday to Dr. S. R. Gardiner in the Bodleian Library,

on his telling me that he had written to you to ask whether you knew of any early drawing or engraving of Drogheda, and that you could not tell him of any. I presumptuously thought that perhaps I might find one, haply unknown to you, in the *Transactions* of the Kilkenny, *alias* Irish Historical Society, and so last night I looked through my set. But to-day I have had humbly to confess that it was vain to find something unknown to you in Ireland.

“ Believe me, yours sincerely,

“ W. D. MACRAY.”

*From Dr. S. R. Gardiner.*

“ November, 20, 1892.

“ I am much obliged to you for your information about Johnston’s ‘History of Drogheda.’ Can you tell me the proper title of a book which the librarian of the Irish Society of Antiquaries (is that the right name?) produced when I was with you, and wanted to know where Teeroghan was? It seemed to be an index to the six-inch map in which all parishes in Ireland were set down, with a reference to a sheet of the Ordnance Map. They do not know anything at the British Museum.”

*From the Same.*

“ December, 1893.

“ I have been making great use of your ‘Documents relating to Ireland’ in writing my account of the early stages of the Kilkenny Confederation, and have, of course, fully acknowledged the value of the collection. I hope to have my first volume out in the beginning of July, and I trust that you will allow me to send you a copy. It will include the chapters on the Ulster Plantation. Will you kindly point out any mistakes that you may find in it? If you are in London next month, could you come here one evening?”

*From J. T. Gilbert to Chief Baron Palles.*

“ Villa Nova, Blackrock, Co. Dublin.

“ MY DEAR LORD,

“ The book about which you inquire is the fifth volume of the ‘Calendar of Ancient Records of Dublin,’ published in 1895 by Messrs. Dollard. I have asked them to send you a copy of that volume.

“ You will see mention of Christopher Palles at pp. 21, 477, and 489. If you know of any other matters in connection with him, perhaps you will kindly let me know. The records in the above volume throw new light on the history of the Catholics in the time of James II.

“ Your Lordship’s very faithfully,

“ J. T. GILBERT.”

*From Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice.*

“ Leigh House, Bradford-on-Avon,

“ September 17, 1894.

“ DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“ I wonder if you could give me assistance on the two following points connected with my ‘Life of Sir William Petty.’ It so oddly happens that I cannot find out the date of the birth of his *eldest surviving son* Charles. It is not given in any Peerage, as far, at least, as I can make out, and my aunt, Lady Louisa Howard, who is a great genealogist, has never been able to ascertain it. Some of his children who were born in Ireland seem to have been baptized in St. Bride’s Church; but whether this child, Charles, was born in Ireland or in England I do not know.

“ (2) I have found a curious letter from Sir William Petty showing how frequently in the seventeenth century the passage of the Irish Channel was rendered difficult by Algerine and Barbary corsairs. Now, I have some idea that as late as quite the end of the last century some town on the south

coast of Ireland, Dungarvan or Baltimore, was plundered by them, they being plundered by one Hacket, who was subsequently caught and hanged; also that Moore wrote a poem on the subject. But I cannot find the poem. Now, do you recollect anything on this point? I seem almost to recollect the refrain of the poem—

“ ‘Hacket of Dungarvan who piloted the Moor,’

and I want to mention the fact, if I am right, in an illustrative note.

“I would be most grateful for any mention you can afford me from your great knowledge of everything connected with Ireland on either of the above subjects.

“I am, dear Mr. Gilbert,

“Yours very truly,

“EDMOND FITZMAURICE.”

*From Dr. J. A. Scott.*

“1, Earlsfort Place, Dublin,

“November 8, 1894.

“DEAR DR. GILBERT,

“Very greatly do I appreciate your kind remembrance, and the generous and splendid gift of your most valuable ‘Narrative.’ The ‘New Light on Old History’ is most deeply interesting, and adds brilliantly to the rich and abundant ‘material’ that your enormous industry and genius and honesty and delicacy of research and handling have given, not alone to Ireland, but all the countries interested in our past.

“You will have perceived that my son James, to whom I gave the volume for review, in yesterday’s *Irish Times* said a word of it, which I trust did not in any way err.

“Believe me, ever yours sincerely,

“J. A. SCOTT.”



*From Rev. Reginald Walsh, O.P.*

“ S. Mary’s, Tallaght, February 22.

“DEAR SIR,

“I take the liberty of addressing you for the following reason. I am engaged in collecting materials for an account of the Dominicans who died for the faith in Ireland during the penal times. In the research I naturally experience some difficulty, and know of none so courteous and so able to extricate me as the author of the ‘Wars of 1641,’ etc., etc. Our fathers had a good deal to do with Rinuccini. I have found notices of priests in the Record Office, Four Courts, and got materials for my sketch from De Burgo, O’Daly, O.P., and from Luke Wadding, O.S.F.

“Father Meehan, in his ‘Geraldines,’ gives the list of those whom I am trying to collect an account of. Some suffered in Dublin. I have seen ‘Dominicans’ in the index of your own work. Can you put me on the track, and tell me where I may look for the knowledge I seek? I will undertake any labour, and I have some skill in reading manuscripts, as in Rome I was employed by the Pope for his edition of S. Thomas.

“I remain, respectfully yours,

“REGINALD WALSH, O.P.”

*From Mrs. Burrell.*

“12, Prince’s Gardens, London, S.W.,

“July 20, 1895.

“DEAR MR. GILBERT,

“It has touched me very much that you recollected our conversation long ago about the name of ‘Clementina’ getting into the Drummond family, and through them to the Willoughbys and to my eldest son, all from the adherence of the Drummonds to the Stuarts; and then you gave me so graphic an account of the manuscript and its contents, and of Clementina’s flight, that when I opened

your beautiful book (which my dear father<sup>1</sup> transmitted to me so that it arrived on my birthday), I quite felt like meeting an old friend! Thank you a thousand times for thinking of me and sending it to me. I assure you it has gratified me very much. I have often intended to ask you and Mrs. Gilbert not to forget us if you come to London and have time to spare to visit us; but our time here is always so short. . . . I do not know what has become of our friend the 'Drummond Missal' (you remember you got an Irish alphabet for me, and the Baroness Willoughby de Eresby used to keep it with the Missal).

"I have much to tell you that would interest you, but must send these words of gratitude off to-day. And with kind regards to Mrs. Gilbert,

"I remain, always sincerely yours,

"MARY BURRELL."

*From the Earl of Dufferin and Ava.*

"Clandeboye, Co. Down, April 22, 1897.

"MY DEAR SIR JOHN,

"I cannot say how very grateful I am to you for your most considerate thought in sending me a copy of the last records of the Privy Council of Ireland. The references to Clandeboye are extremely interesting, and the volume has arrived most opportunely, as I am endeavouring to draw as accurate a picture as I can of this district at the time of its settlement by the first Lord Clandeboye. I only hope that some of these days I may have an opportunity of thanking you in person for your courtesy.

"Believe me,

"Yours sincerely,

"DUFFERIN AND AVA."

<sup>1</sup> Sir John Banks, K.C.B., M.D., D.L.

*From Mrs. O'Neill.*

“176, New King's Road, Fulham, London,

“May 6, 1897.

“DEAR SIR,

“In the *Freeman's Journal* there is an account of the meeting of the Royal Irish Academy, where you so kindly mentioned Mr. Henry O'Neill's work on the ‘Irish Crosses,’ and the assistance I gave him. Only for my exertions he could not, through illness, have brought out his last three books, as I had to support the family for years. I am now sixty-six, and yours is the first public recognition of his struggles for the good of his country I have heard of in all these years, and I feel deeply touched.

“Dr. Fraser said the work was not reliable. I have the rubbings of the crosses still to show they are correct. The lithographs were compared with photographs at South Kensington, and proved to be correct. Mr. O'Neill was most particular in all his drawings. To show you the party he had against him—when I took a copy of the ‘Fine Arts’ to Sir William Wilde, he said, he, Dr. William Stokes, and a number of other Academicians, had made up their minds not to buy the book; but as he was ‘always gallant to the ladies,’ he took one from me.

“Showing what my poor husband had to contend with when he died, I told Sir Bernard Burke, who said, ‘Oh, how cruelly they have treated Mr. O'Neill!’ What should I have done only for Sir Bernard Burke at that sad time?

“Thanking you very much for your kind words,

“I remain, dear sir,

“Yours gratefully,

“JULIET O'NEILL.”

## CHAPTER XIX

1898

Death—Some Traits and Characteristics—Letters.

A FEW days before his death, as he felt slightly unwell, his physician made a thorough examination, and pronounced him in sound health, needing only plenty of fresh air and exercise. The weather was perfect ; a little trip to Donegal was planned by him and his wife. On the Sunday before his death, friends came to Villa Nova in the afternoon ; Gilbert was in high spirits, and it was remarked that he looked well and young. On Monday<sup>1</sup> he and his wife spent an hour out-of-doors within their place, enjoying the beauty of the brilliant May morning ; sunshine, delightful verdure, flowers in early bloom, made the little demesne a paradise. Gilbert and his wife lingered in one favourite haunt after another, rejoicing together and thanking God for their happiness. He stood under a laburnum tree with his head in the gold, and said, "Is it not beautiful?" Roses already hung in clusters about the door. "This bush has too many buds," he said ; and they stood together and picked some away. After lunch he prepared to go to Dublin to attend a meeting of the Council of the Royal Irish Academy. His wife wished to accompany him, but as she had been suffering from a cold, he would not allow her to leave home. She tried to persuade him to put off his visit to town till the next day, when she might be with him. "No," he said, "I must be at the meeting of the Council ; you shall come the next time." She helped him to dress while they chatted and laughed

<sup>1</sup> May 23, 1898.

together, and after a tender parting he walked away from her at the door, his last look at his home thrown backward to his wife across the roses. He went out of the garden wicket, which had known his passing for fifty years—as a youth of nineteen, as a man till the age of sixty-nine,—and he saw his home no more. A friend, speaking with him as he walked down Merrion Avenue, thought him looking exceedingly well, and as usual felt the influence of his sweet and genial humour.

\* \* \* \* \*

He died of sudden failure of the heart on the way to Dublin. There was no struggle, no suffering for him; no cause for spiritual dread in the souls of those who loved him. Sudden and unlooked-for as came the summons, he was ready. No more pure and noble spirit ever answered to the call of his Maker.

About his “book-room” as he left it on that last May day, there lay portions of the works, in manuscript or in proof, which had engaged him at the moment: the Ormonde Papers (Historical Manuscripts Commission), the Calendar of the Dublin Records, and the slips of printed matter for ‘Selections (shortened) from the History of Dublin,’ then in the press, and published in 1903; by his desk the pen, on which the ink was scarcely dry when the hand that had taken it up that morning with his usual calm eagerness was stilled for ever.

\* \* \* \* \*

In summing up the character of one whose qualities and personality made a whole so rare, the biographer has no ordinary difficulty. The story of the man and his career records an iron determination which overcame obstacles seemingly insurmountable, a prudence and judicial power which bridled and used a dominant passion for the highest purposes, a calm spirit of abnegation which put self behind and the cause at heart to the front, and a devotion to his aim which spared no labour and counted no personal cost. If genius be “an infinite capacity for taking pains,” then on

this score alone he must be credited with a large genius. The calm judicial character of his mind was felt by all who were concerned with him in the affairs, ordinary or extraordinary, of life. "You would have made a splendid lawyer," Lord Russell of Killowen said to him on one occasion, after a long conversation with him on a knotty point. Yet with these strenuous faculties for work always employed, he had a curious natural facility, a surprising ingenuity, for making those around him happy. There was no grind in his machinery to vex the eye and ear with dust and noise; the wheel turned without sound, the shuttle moved unseen. The nature was so big there seemed to be room in it for all things great and little to move together in harmony, and the peace-restoring atmosphere which surrounded him in daily life had a mesmeric influence over more restless organizations.

One of the most tolerant of men, his dislike of "scamped" or inaccurate work amounted to intolerance, and superficial productions on serious subjects, especially those connected with history, were offensive to him. He could not sympathize with authors who would not take pains, and who unscrupulously increased the number, already too great, of misleading records.

Restrained by the reticence of a deep and sensitive nature, he was not given to pouring out his thoughts to correspondents, and his words were few when he was most strongly moved; neither did he allow himself leisure for writings unconnected with the work which was the subject of most letters written by him; such letters being largely in reply to demands for information, sure to be generously supplied wherever he discerned earnestness of purpose or ability in the applicant. That he could supply material ready made on the basis of research to every one ambitious of doing a little writing, more or less historically true, was hardly to be expected, and yet the demands for such service from him were almost incessant. He used to tell with glee of a man who sat beside him at a public dinner in London, who said to him wistfully, "I think I should like to write a history."

"Of what country, for what people would you wish to undertake the task?" asked Gilbert.

The aspirant for the laurels of the historian paused meditatively. "I'm sure I don't know," he said at last, with reluctant frankness.

The letters from his correspondents show how eagerly and confidently his help was sought by serious contemporary fellow-workers, and how liberally it was given; but the biographer has failed to recover the answers which bestowed what the correspondents had asked for. On the day but one before his death he spent the best hours of the morning in collating material to send to France in compliance with the request of a certain French archivist. His wife expressed regret at his undertaking such tasks while he had so many fatiguing works of his own on hands. "Well," he said, "this is a man worth helping." "At least," she urged, "do not hurry about it." "Oh," he answered, smiling, "it is gone by the midday post!"

An estimate of his character would not be complete without indication of the simple innate modesty which ever underlay his confidence in his own power and consciousness of the value of his work, and which harmonized so well with the dignity of his character. This modesty showed itself most noticeably in his intercourse with those who served him or came into close contact with him. "I am immeasurably inferior to you in intellect and spirit," he wrote to one who was dear to him, and whom he therefore unduly glorified. "He was meek and humble," said a man who had been for long years accustomed to do his bidding. Ignoring the unusual personal attractions which others saw and felt to be his, he could write—

"Nature gave me what I value more than externals—a true and sensitive heart, and a strong faculty to appreciate high and noble qualities."

Though reserved on so profound a subject, he had a deep sense of religion, and a thorough reliance on Providence. "Do not repine," he said to one in sorrow. "Depend on it,

Providence orders all things for the best. Everything ends well." He loved privacy in daily prayer, saying, "I would rather not let any one see what passes between me and my Creator." The Lord's Prayer was his favourite prayer, and the spiritual book of his choice was the "Imitation of Christ," by Thomas à Kempis. Of St. James's words, "Religion clean and undefiled before God and the Father, is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their tribulation: and to keep one's self unspotted from this world," he once remarked, in that playful way of his which often sought to cover the deepest feeling, "I think no definition could beat that!"

He took with him out of the world the faith to which he was born, and persisted, unostentatiously and with characteristic reserve, in the spiritual practices which he had learned at his mother's knee. "It is a tremendous thing to me to receive my God," he said to one who shared his most sacred thoughts; yet despite this keen sense of reverential awe, sprung from an unusually vivid power of realizing an idea, he fulfilled all the difficult duties of his religion with childlike fidelity. Of the truth of the dogmas of Catholicity he had thorough conviction. A friend having on one occasion pointed to blots on certain pages of the history of the Church, observing that they might be held accountable for deviations from her paths, he laid down his book on his knee, and, after a few moments' reflection, he remarked impressively, "There is no excuse to be made for the confounding of two things: the blunders, or even crimes of men, and the doctrines of religion." Speaking of the spirit of unbelief, so largely abroad, he said, "Believe me, it is a disease in men's minds; but it passes. One, diseased, will infect a whole group; but every man, if left to his own heart, may find the cure, if he will." His trust in God, as merciful beyond our understanding, and his charity of mind towards all men, produced in him a peaceful attitude of mind in relation to the problems of faith. To Him who made the mysteries of life and death, including all other mysteries, he left their solution. He was ever aware of the limitations of the human



intellect, and willing to await the great revelation following the release of the spirit.

Immorality was a crime in his eyes; and for lack of honour he admitted of no excuse. Yet his voice was seldom lifted in condemnation of an individual. A favourite little quotation from the song of Polly Peachum in the *Beggar's Opera* was sometimes used by him in rebuking a rash judgment. "Oh, ponder well; be not severe!" he would cry laughingly.

A touch of the light whip of good-humoured satire was the worst punishment he ever bestowed on any who were suggested to him as worthy of castigation. "If you want to make good effect by a reproof," he said, "you will do it best by putting the matter in a humorous light. The sharp reproach may be forgotten, but never the laugh." Yet he was "a good hater" in the best sense of the word; his likes and dislikes were strong and unchanging.

Though not rich, he was, eminently, a contented man as to worldly possessions, satisfied so long as by any amount of labour he could command means to realize his ideals. Larger fortune would have given him increase of power, but though well aware of this, he made it no cause of complaint. "Don't count up money," he said playfully, when it was suggested that it might be well to provide for the night that cometh when a man can no longer work. "If we do our duty, Providence will always give enough. I will work while I live."

His taste in poetry and in art was keen and true. He held by such masters as Shakespeare, Milton, Michael Angelo, Donatello; but he loved a good ballad, a pathetic song, and the singing of a crowd of poor children in a convent school would bring tears to his eyes. For Moore's Melodies, words and music, he had a special love, partly from their intrinsic tenderness, partly from affectionate association. At all times he was keenly sensitive to the best music, often shrinking from its power of disturbing peace by rousing memories of pain.

In Irish politics he had a hopeful outlook, and for the future of his country he pursued his untiring labours, laying up store of material for its information. The present apathy of many Irish people on this point did not daunt him. "One day to come," he said, "they will wake up and look round for the authentic facts of their history, and I will work while I live to provide for that day."

To the extraordinary harvest of accomplished work he has left behind him his biographer, in the "Dictionary of National Biography," calls attention by the statement that Sir John T. Gilbert "ultimately revealed more of the hidden or forgotten sources of Irish history than had been done by any single student."

In the fifteenth Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission (as noticed in the *Times*, June 19, 1899), the Commissioners state, "Sir John T. Gilbert carried on the duties entrusted to him, solely, in Ireland until May last, when he died, leaving a void in the work of your Commissioners which will be found most difficult to fill."

The following letters are taken from the great number of such expressions which poured into his late home, from friends and from public bodies, in the summer of 1898, and later.

*From Thomas Arnold, M.A., Fellow of the Royal University of Ireland.*

"Dublin, May, 28, 1898.

"DEAR LADY GILBERT,

"I know I need not assure you with what a shock, and with what deep sorrow—chiefly for you, but in a measure also for all who, like myself, had the pleasure and honour of his friendship—I heard at the Academy on Monday that the able and excellent man with whom I had been conversing the previous afternoon had with such terrible suddenness been taken from among us. He seemed on that Sunday afternoon

to be in a very genial and kindly mood, and I was particularly struck by the mildness and fairness of his expressions when we were discussing two persons on whom I, perhaps, should have been disposed to lean more hardly. This loss to Ireland is in many ways irreparable; but there are many who are better able to estimate that than I. Assuring you of my own and my wife's truest sympathy, and feeling certain that He who in His impenetrable wisdom has dealt the blow will give you the necessary grace to bear it with fortitude and patience,

"I remain, dear Lady Gilbert,

"Always sincerely yours,

"T. ARNOLD."

*From Lord Russell of Killowen.*

"Tadworth Court, June 21, 1898.

"MY DEAR ROSA,

". . . Words of sympathy and affection avail little at such a time, but by-and-by, when the sharp edge of your trial is ever so little lessened, you will find comfort in thinking of these, and still more in the recollection of the noble, simple, unselfish life of him whom you have in *this* world lost. . . .

"I am glad to see that on all sides Sir John's life and work are appreciated as they deserve. I hope none of his unfinished work will be allowed to perish. What mysteries Life and Providence are! How very sad, in our dull comprehension at least, to think of the stores of learning (owned by few, if any) which are buried in his grave.

"I feel, my dear Rosa, that this letter will do little to serve its purpose, but I know you will find in the end peace and comfort in that quarter where the prayers of the heavy-burdened, humbly offered, are always heard.

"My dear Rosa,

"Always affectionately,

"RUSSELL OF KILLOWEN."

*From John Ribton Garstin, V.P.R.I.A.*

“Braganstown, Castle Bellingham, May 24, 1898.

“DEAR LADY GILBERT,

“. . . I must write a line to assure you of the sincere sorrow with which at the R.I.A. meeting yesterday I heard of your husband's death. He was one of my oldest friends, and we always pulled harmoniously together.

“It is an open secret that he was to have been our next President.

“If sympathy is helpful, be assured of that of yours sincerely,

“JOHN RIBTON GARSTIN.”

*From Henry Bedford, M.A.*

“All Hallows College, Dublin, May 30, 1898.

“DEAR LADY GILBERT,

“. . . The recollections of past happy days must be my excuse for expressing my sympathy with your sudden and heavy loss. So many early friends have passed away that I feel as though alone ; and now another whom I highly esteemed has gone.

“May God sustain you under such trying circumstances, and be sure that old friends will forget neither of you in their prayers to heaven. For this I have the assurance of every friend I meet.

“Sincerely yours,

“HENRY BEDFORD.”

*From Rev. J. Hogan, S.S.*

“St. John's Ecclesiastical Seminary, Boston, U.S.A.,

“June 3, 1898.

“MY DEAR LADY GILBERT,

“The news of your sad bereavement has just reached me, and I wish at once to say how sincerely and heartily I sympathize with you in your sorrow. I think I can

divine much of what you feel. Most heartily do I pray to God to comfort you, and to remove the dark cloud that has settled on you.

“To-morrow I will say mass for the dear departed one, that God may speedily give him the reward he so long laboured for and so well deserved.

“Most truly yours,

“J. HOGAN.”

*From Mrs. John Dillon.*

“2, North Great George's Street, Dublin,

“June 6, 1898.

“DEAR LADY GILBERT,

“. . . I do want you to know how often, and with what true sympathy, we are thinking of you.

“No human words can bring comfort to desolation such as yours, but those who, in their measure, sorrow with you, long to humbly remind you of the universal feeling that Ireland, too, has sustained an irreparable loss in him whose intellectual gifts and wonderful scholarship were only equalled by his elevation of character and true kindness of heart.

“Believe me, dear Lady Gilbert,

“Affectionately yours,

“ELIZABETH DILLON.”

*From Miss O'Conor Eccles.*

“26, Margravine Gardens, West Kensington,

“May 31, 1898.

“DEAR LADY GILBERT,

“Permit me, though comparatively a stranger, to assure you with what sympathy and sincere regret we heard the sad news of your bereavement. If any comfort is to be found at such a time in earthly considerations, it must surely be in the thought that many mourn with you, and that even people of whom you know little feel the death of Sir

John Gilbert as a personal and national loss. . . . Not every one is so well prepared. . . . May he rest in peace.

“With renewed expressions of our sympathy,

“Believe me, dear Lady Gilbert,

“Very truly yours,

“CHARLOTTE O’CONOR ECCLES.”

*From Mrs. Blundell. (M. E. Francis.)*

“Convent Villa, Sidmouth, Devon,

“May 28, 1898.

“MY DEAR LADY GILBERT,

“I have just heard of your terrible loss, and feel that I must write and tell you how deeply I sympathize with you. May God comfort and sustain you! He alone can help you. But you will take comfort, too, in the remembrance of how you brightened your dear one’s life, and how much happiness you brought him. The remembrance, too, of his staunchness to his religion and country, and the universal respect in which he was held by all who knew him, will be a help to you by and by, if not now. I will pray for you and for him.

“With deepest sympathy,

“Yours affectionately,

“MARY BLUNDELL.

““Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth.””

*From Sir Francis Cruise, M.D., D.L.*

“93, Merrion Square, Dublin, March 17, 1900.

“DEAR LADY GILBERT,

“I knew dear Sir John very well, especially when his sister Philippa was ill, and when Miss Gilbert was in constant care of her, and I saw the last of both these amiable, devoted creatures who lived in the love of their dear brother.

“I can never forget his gentle care of them and cheerful

devotion to their wishes, combined with a certain quiet humour which sustained us all in the midst of great sorrow.

"Of Sir John's deep learning, especially in his favourite line of research, I need say nothing ; you know it better than I do.

"I remain, dear Lady Gilbert,

"Yours faithfully,

"F. R. CRUISE."

*From Rev. Maxwell H. Close, M.R.I.A.*

"Dublin, August 30, 1900.

"DEAR LADY GILBERT,

"Sir John's departure was a great loss to the Council of the R.I.A., of which he had been a member for so many years. I have often been struck with the judiciousness and businesslike character of his proposals and suggestions at the meetings of the Council. The strength and accuracy of his memory enabled him frequently to supply the history of matters under consideration, which history was sometimes of late known only to himself, and was often an important element in determining the decision upon such questions.

"I have often noticed that he was always actuated by a desire to accommodate members of the Academy, and to give facilities to readers and investigators, as far as his duty to the Academy and to the Library would allow.

"His numerous literary monuments that he has left behind speak for themselves. His work upon them was carried on so quietly and unostentatiously that, in most cases, no one was aware of his having been engaged upon them until they were actually published.

"I need not say how heartily I sympathize with you and Lady Russell<sup>1</sup> on the further great loss that you have lately sustained.

"Yours very truly,

"M. H. CLOSE."

<sup>1</sup> The death of Lord Russell of Killowen on August 10, 1900.

*Royal Irish Academy.*

“Dawson Street, Dublin, June 13, 1898.

“DEAR LADY GILBERT,

“I cannot forward the enclosed resolution of the Royal Irish Academy without assuring you of my heart-felt sympathy.

“We became Members of the Academy within a year of each other; now a friendship of over forty years has been snapt.

“Very faithfully yours,

“E. PERCIVAL WRIGHT, M.D.,

“Sec. R.I. Acad.”

*Royal Irish Academy.*

Copy of resolution unanimously adopted by the Royal Irish Academy on June 13, 1898—

“That the Academy desires at this, the first meeting after the death of Sir John Gilbert, to place on record its deep sense of the loss it has sustained, and desires to offer its condolence to Lady Gilbert and the other members of his family.”

*The Royal University of Ireland.*

“Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin, July 29, 1898.

“MADAM,

“We are directed to communicate to you the following resolution passed at the meeting of the Senate to-day, the first held here since the death of Sir John T. Gilbert:—

“‘That the Senate desire to record their deep regret at the death of their esteemed colleague, Sir John T. Gilbert, whose services to education were so very valuable.’

“Faithfully yours,

“J. C. MEREDITH, }  
“J. MAGRATH, } *Secretaries.*

“Lady Gilbert,

“Villa Nova, Blackrock, Co. Dublin.”



*Royal Hibernian Academy of Arts.*

“Lower Abbey Street, Dublin, June 7, 1898.

“DEAR MADAM,

“At a meeting of the Council held yesterday a resolution was passed, of which the following is a copy :—

“‘That the President and Council of the Royal Hibernian Academy have received with deep regret the intelligence of the sudden and unexpected death of the Professor of Antiquities to the Academy, Sir John T. Gilbert, M.R.I.A. They deeply deplore their loss, and desire the Secretary to communicate to Lady Gilbert their sincere condolence with her in her affliction.’

“I am, dear Madam,

“With great respect,

“Yours faithfully,

“S. CATTERSON SMITH, R.H.A.

“To Lady Gilbert.”

*From Professor B. O’Looney, M.R.I.A.*

“Grove Villa House, Crumlin, Co. Dublin,

“August, 1901.

“MY DEAR LADY GILBERT,

“I am delighted to know that we may hope to have a faithful biography of my genial, kind, and learned friend, the late Sir John T. Gilbert.

“I had the pleasure of his intimate acquaintance for many years, and I flatter myself that I enjoyed his full confidence to the day of his death.

“I am satisfied that you will discharge a national duty by leaving to posterity a reliable biography of the man who was in reality the forerunner and founder of the modern revival of interest in the study and cultivation of the language, and

literature, and history of Ireland, to the advancement of which he devoted his labours from early boyhood to the day of his death.

“I beg to remain, my dear Lady Gilbert,

“Yours very truly,

“BRIAN O’LOONEY.”

*From Most Rev. Dr. Mac Cormack.*

“Mount St. Mary’s, Galway, May 1, 1900.

“MY DEAR LADY GILBERT,

“I have learned with very sincere pleasure that you are preparing a biography of your beloved husband.

“The name of Sir John Gilbert will be associated in my memory as that of a scholar of deep erudition, a historian of exceptional eminence, a gentleman of the most amiable and winning qualities, a friend of unswerving constancy, an Irishman of purest patriotism, and a Catholic loyally devoted to his church.

“His published works tell the world that tale of his laborious literary life as a scholar and writer ; but the charm of his character could only be known and appreciated by those who were privileged to confer with him in his study at Villa Nova or at the Royal Irish Academy.

“Wishing your project the eminent success which your subject deserves,

“I am, my dear Lady Gilbert,

“Yours very faithfully,

“F. J. MAC CORMACK,

“Bishop of Galway and Kilmacduagh.”

## APPENDIX



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## I

SAMUEL WHYTE'S SCHOOL, DUBLIN<sup>1</sup>

THOMAS MOORE says : " To the drama and all connected with it Mr. Whyte had been through his whole life warmly devoted, having lived in habits of intimacy with the family of Brinsley Sheridan, as well as with most of the other ornaments of the Irish stage in the middle of the last century. Among his private pupils, too, he had to number some of the most distinguished of our people of fashion, both male and female ; and of one of the three beautiful Misses Montgomery, who had been under his tuition, a portrait hung in his drawing-room. In the direction of those private theatricals, which were at that time so fashionable among the higher circles in Ireland, he had always a leading share. Besides teaching and training the young actors, he took frequently a part in the *dramatis personæ* himself ; and either the prologue or epilogue was generally furnished by his pen. Among the most memorable of the theatricals which he assisted in may be mentioned the performance of the *Beggar's Opera* at Carton, the seat of the Duke of Leinster, on which occasion the Rev. Dean Marlay, who was afterwards Bishop of Waterford, besides performing the part of ' Lockit ' in the opera, recited a prologue, of which he himself was the author. The ' Peachum ' of the night was Lord Charlemont ; the ' Lucy,' Lady Louisa Conolly ; and Captain Morris (I know not whether the admirable song-writer) was the ' Mac-heath.' "

<sup>1</sup> " History of Dublin," vol. iii., p. 205.

## II

### THE ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY<sup>1</sup>

The Royal Irish Academy was founded in 1785. Its objects were to be attained through the efforts of three distinct committees, *i.e.* of Sciences, of Polite Literature, and of Antiquities. The first meeting was held at Lord Charlemont's on April 18, 1785. Among other resolutions passed at the meeting were the following:—

“That the Irish Academy of Sciences, Polite Literature, and Antiquities, do consist of a president, a council of eighteen, and an indefinite number of members. That the council be divided into three committees, each consisting of six members, which committees shall have for their objects, respectively, the departments of Science, Polite Literature, and Antiquities. That each of these committees meet every third week, and be empowered to form by-laws for the regulation of their several meetings, at each of which meetings every member of the Academy shall be invited to assist. That there be two public general meetings of the Academy in the year, at which meetings the titles of the publications which have been approved of by the several committees shall be read, and candidates shall be balloted for, such as shall have signified their intentions of proposing themselves as members, six weeks at least before the meeting.”

In 1785 letters patent were granted by the king, constituting the group of original members one body, politic and corporate, in deed and name, by the name of the Royal Irish Academy, and nominating the Earl of Charlemont the first president of the Academy. In a preface to the first volume of the Academy's *Transactions*, the Rev. Robert Burrowes, Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, after a brief review of the obstacles which had previously impeded the progress of science and learning in Ireland, wrote—

“The influence of many of these causes time has in a considerable degree weakened, and peculiar circumstances have now [1786] given to Ireland an importance in the political scale which habits of a well-directed industry alone can establish and maintain. Whatever, therefore, tends by the cultivation of useful arts and sciences to improve and facilitate its manufactures; whatever tends by the

<sup>1</sup> “History of Dublin,” vol. iii., p. 228.



elegance of polite literature to civilize the manners and refine the tastes of its people; whatever tends to awaken a spirit of literary ambition by keeping alive the memory of its ancient reputation for learning, cannot but prove of the greatest national advantage. To a wish to promote in these important respects the advancement of knowledge in this kingdom, the Royal Irish Academy for Science, Polite Literature, and Antiquities owes its establishment; and though the members who compose it are not entirely without hopes that their efforts may hereafter become, perhaps, extensively useful and respected, yet the original intent of their institution must be considered as confining their views for the present to Ireland."

In 1800 the Irish House of Commons granted to the Academy a sum of £1000, with an annual allowance of £50. In 1816 the Academy petitioned Parliament for an increase of financial support, stating that "since the union of the two countries the altered circumstances of the city of Dublin, as being no longer the winter residence of the Irish nobility and gentry, have more and more contributed to diminish the number of candidates for admission, and of course proportionably to lessen the funds of the Academy, until at length the present members feel themselves reduced to the alternative of either relinquishing their pursuits, or of soliciting from the bounty of Parliament such increased assistance as is essential to their continuing an active body corporate." After this date a grant of about £600 a year was contributed by Government towards the maintenance of the Royal Irish Academy.

Donations from various sources and kinds came to the institution. In 1789 Timothy Cunningham, barrister of Gray's Inn, London, bequeathed to it "the sum of £1000, to be laid out in such funds as they should think proper, and the interest of it to be disposed of in such premiums as they should think proper for the improvement of natural knowledge and other objects of their institution." To carry out the intention of the donor, a large gold medal, bearing the head of Lord Charlemont, was struck as the Academy's reward for distinguished literary work in the service of Ireland.

In his "History of Dublin," writing of the Royal Irish Academy, Gilbert says—

"From the period of its foundation, the Academy occasionally received donations of ancient objects of interest discovered in various parts of Ireland; but as it possessed no regular repository for their custody, many of these acquisitions were embezzled, and others were deposited in the museum of Trinity College. The commencement of a museum illustrative of the history of the people of Ireland in former ages dates from 1839, when it was initiated by a number of private subscribers purchasing and presenting to the Academy two large golden torques found at Tara. At the same time the late James M'Cullagh, a mathematician of European celebrity, gave to the institution the invaluable 'Cross of Cong,'

executed by a native Irish artificer about half a century before the first descent of the Anglo-Normans on this country."

On the occasion of the completion of the purchase of Sir William Betham's collection of manuscripts for the Academy by private subscriptions of the members, the late Right Rev. Dr. Charles Graves, Bishop of Limerick, observed—

"Science and literature have many departments, not one of which is undeserving of our regard, so long as it is cultivated in a liberal and philosophical spirit; but the history of our own country and of its language has especial claims to our consideration, unless we choose to renounce the name of Irishmen. It is no morbid feeling which leads us to turn with a longing and affectionate interest to the ancient history and literature of our own country. It is no fond national conceit which inspires us with the desire to gather and to preserve those of its scattered records which have escaped the tooth of time, the ravages of barbarism, and the persecuting rigour of a miscalculating policy. It is indeed wise in us to soar as high as we may, seeking wide and clear views of the entire horizon of human knowledge and science; but even to those elevating regions let us carry with us a loving remembrance of the spot of earth from which we took our flight—of our birthplace—and the home which is the sanctuary of the purest and strongest of our earthly affections."

III  
SONNET

*Written after reading Gilbert's "History of Dublin."*

Long have I loved the beauty of thy streets,  
Fair Dublin ; long, with unavailing vows,  
Sigh'd to all guardian deities who rouse  
The spirits of dead nations to new heats  
Of life and triumph :—vain the fond conceits,  
Nestling like eaves-warmed doves 'neath patriot brows !  
Vain as the " Hope," that from thy Custom-House,  
Looks o'er the vacant bay in vain for fleets.  
Genius alone brings back the days of yore :  
Look ! look, what life is in these quaint old shops—  
The loneliest lanes are rattling with the roar  
Of coach and chair ; fans, feathers, flambeaux, fops  
Flutter and flicker through yon open door,  
Where Handel's hand moves the great organ stops.

D. F. MAC CARTHY.

*March 11, 1856.*

IV

A SHAMROCK FROM THE IRISH SHORE

*(On receiving a Shamrock in a Letter from Ireland.)*

O Postman ! speed thy tardy gait—  
 Go quicker round from door to door ;  
 For thee I watch, for thee I wait,  
 Like many a weary wanderer more.  
 Thou bringest news of bale and bliss—  
 Some life begun, some life well o'er.  
 He stops—he rings—O heaven ! what's this ?  
 A shamrock from the Irish shore !

Dear emblem of my native land,  
 By fresh fond words kept fresh and green ;  
 The pressure of an unfelt hand—  
 The kisses of a lip unseen ;  
 A throb from my dead mother's heart—  
 My father's smile revived once more—  
 Oh, youth ! oh, love ! oh, hope thou art,  
 Sweet shamrock from the Irish shore !

Enchanter ! with thy wand of power  
 Thou mak'st the past be present still :  
 The emerald lawn, the lime-leaved bower,  
 The circling shore, the sunlit hill ;  
 The grass, in winter's wintriest hours,  
 By dewy daisies dimpled o'er,  
 Half hiding 'neath their trembling flowers  
 The shamrock of the Irish shore !

And thus, where'er my footsteps strayed  
 By queenly Florence, kingly Rome—  
 By Padua's long and lone arcade—  
 By Ischia's fires and Adria's foam ;  
 By Spezzia's fatal waves that kissed  
 My poet sailing calmly o'er,  
 By all, by each I mourned and missed  
 The shamrock of the Irish shore !

I saw the palm-tree stand aloof,  
Irresolute, 'twixt the sand and sea ;  
I saw upon the trellised roof  
Outspread, the wine that was to be ;  
A giant-flowered and glorious tree  
I saw the tall magnolia soar ;  
But there, even there, I longed for thee,  
Poor shamrock of the Irish shore !

Now on the ramparts of Boulogne,  
As lately by the lonely Rance,  
At evening as I watch the sun,  
I look ! I dream ! Can this be France  
Not Albion's cliffs, how near they be,  
He seems to love to linger o'er,  
But gilds, by a remoter sea,  
The shamrock on the Irish shore !

I'm with him in that wholesome clime—  
That fruitful soil, that verdurous sod—  
Where hearts unstained by vulgar crime  
Have still a simple faith in God ;  
Hearts that in pleasure and in pain,  
The more they're trod rebound the more,  
Like thee, when wet with heaven's own rain,  
O shamrock of the Irish shore !

Memorial of my native land,  
True emblem of my land and race,  
Thy small and tender leaves expand,  
But only in thy native place.  
Thou needest for thyself and seed  
Soft dews around, kind sunshine o'er ;  
Transplanted thou'rt the merest weed,  
O shamrock of the Irish shore !

Here, on the tawny fields of France,  
Or in the rank, red English clay,  
Thou showest a stronger form perchance,  
A bolder front thou mayest display.  
More able to resist the scythe  
That cut so keen, so sharp before,  
But then thou art no more the blithe  
Bright shamrock of the Irish shore !

Ah, me ! to think—thy scorns, thy slights,  
Thy trampled tears, thy nameless grave

On Fredericksburg's ensanguined heights,  
 Or by Potomac's purpled wave !  
 Ah, me ! to think that power malign  
 Thus turns thy sweet green sap to gore.  
 And what calm rapture might be thine,  
 Sweet shamrock of the Irish shore !

Struggling, and yet for strife unmeet,  
 True type of trustful love thou art ;  
 Thou liest the whole year at my feet,  
 To live but one day at my heart.  
 One day of festal pride to lie  
 Upon the loved one's heart—what more ?  
 Upon the loved one's heart to die,  
 O shamrock of the Irish shore !

And shall I not return thy love ?  
 And shalt thou not, as thou should'st, be,  
 Placed on thy son's proud heart above  
 The red rose, or the fleur-de-lis ?  
 Yes, from these heights the waters beat,  
 I vow to press thy cheek once more,  
 And lie for ever at thy feet,  
 O shamrock of the Irish shore !

D. F. MAC CARTHY.

BOULOGNE-SUR-MER, *March* 17, 1865.

SECRETARY OF PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE,  
IRELAND

*Extract from Observations of Deputy Keeper forwarded March 6, 1874, to H. H. Murray, Esq., and Report of Committee on Public Record Office of Ireland.*

“ I consider that the abolition of the office of Secretary would be attended with great inconvenience, and would operate very injuriously on the higher interests of the service in this department. I do not agree that the work of that office is slight, although it leaves the Secretary time for intermittent occupation under his agreement with the Treasury. There is a great variety of details in the internal administration and economy of the office, in which his intervention and assistance are constantly required. The presence of a man of acknowledged learning and ability in such a position gives a character to the office highly conducive to its general efficiency. I am not, myself, prepared to assume a new class of duties ; and, with the prospects before us, I see no possibility of adding to those now discharged by the Assistant Deputy Keeper.

“ Subject to the decision of Mr. Gilbert, I would not object to the arrangement proposed.”

## VI

### “LEABHAR NA H-UIDHRI”—“LEABHAR BREAC”

Preface from “LEABHAR NA H-UIDHRI.” Dublin, 1870.

This volume is the first result of the Royal Irish Academy's adoption of suggestions, which, as the member of their Council specially in charge of their manuscripts, I submitted, in 1869, for the publication of ancient Irish texts in their original integrity.

“Leabhar na h-Uidhri”—the oldest volume known entirely in the Irish language—is regarded as the chief surviving literary monument, not ecclesiastical, of ancient Ireland. It is here printed from an exact lithograph of the original by Mr. Joseph O'Longan, of the Royal Irish Academy's Department of Irish Manuscripts, and collated by him in conjunction with Mr. Brian O'Looney, editor and translator of various old Irish texts.

Every line corresponds with the original; contracted words and symbols of abbreviations are faithfully reproduced, and the measurement of the writing on the pages agrees closely with that of the manuscript. Obscure, illegible, and fractured places are indicated by equivalent spaces numbered within brackets, and a table is appended by reference to which the nature of each of these defects may be ascertained. No conjectural restoration has been admitted of any partially lost letter, aspirate, or accent.

The pages have been numbered consecutively from 1 to the end, as it was found impracticable to reconcile former markings, or to estimate with precision the quantity of missing leaves. Initial and ornamental letters have been engraved from tracings. The only colour ornamentation in the original consists of inelaborate touches in yellow, red, and dark purple—mostly near or within the frames of the initial or other large characters. Two pages, coloured in facsimile, in the Appendix, exhibit the style of these tints and the appearance which now presents. An account of “Leabhar na h-Uidhri” and its contents was compiled about 1843 by the late Eugene O'Curry, and forms portion of the unpublished catalogues of the Royal Irish Academy. The description here printed of the manuscript is based upon and embodies this work of O'Curry, but with such revision in details as it would, no doubt, have received at his own hand prior to its publication.



An index has been appended, by which each piece in the book may be referred to, and the edition has been limited to two hundred copies.

J. T. GILBERT, M.R.I.A.,  
*Librarian of the Academy.*

ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY HOUSE,  
DUBLIN, *November, 1870.*

“LEABHAR BREAC.” Part I. Dublin, 1872.

ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY HOUSE,  
DUBLIN, *27th July, 1872.*

The present part of “LEABHAR BREAC” has been executed on the system initiated in the Academy’s edition of “LEABHAR NA H-UIDHRI,” issued in 1870.

Mr. Joseph O’Longan, of the Academy’s Department of Irish Manuscripts, has reproduced the text in close conformity to the original, with which the lithographic copy has been revised and collated by him in conjunction with B. O’Looney, M.R.I.A. No alterations or emendations have been admitted; obliterations or fractures in the original are indicated by equivalent spaces, with numbers between brackets.

The second part of “LEABHAR BREAC” is in progress. With it will be issued conclusion of Table of Contents, description of the original manuscript, indices, and coloured facsimiles. The edition of “LEABHAR BREAC” is limited to two hundred copies.

J. T. GILBERT, M.R.I.A.,  
*Librarian of the Academy.*

#### “IRISH TEXTS.”

At the instance of the Librarian, the Council have commenced the lithographing of Irish texts, which it is hoped will be attended with important results in the promotion of Celtic studies. The first manuscript selected for lithographing was the “Leabhar na h-Uidhri,” the most ancient and valuable Irish text (not ecclesiastical) now extant in these countries. An accurate and elegant lithographic copy — line for line — of this volume has been made by Mr. O’Longan; and it is with great satisfaction that we are able to announce that the entire is now on stones in proof, and will be printed off as rapidly as is consistent with careful final revision. The volume will be issued to subscribers at as moderate a rate as possible, to bring it within the reach of Celtic students at home and abroad.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Minutes of the Royal Irish Academy, Stated Meeting, March 16, 1870, pp. viii., ix. Session 1869-70.

From Preface to "LEABHAR BREAC." 1876, p. vii.

Her Majesty's Government having been pleased to place at the disposal of the Royal Irish Academy a special grant for researches in connection with Celtic manuscripts, and a Committee of Irish Manuscripts having been constituted for the administration of that fund, a proposal was, in the year 1869, submitted to this Committee by the Librarian, Mr. J. T. Gilbert, for the publication of lithographed transcripts of ancient Irish texts in their integrity, so as to place copies of the oldest and best manuscripts within reach of Celtic scholars in every part of the world. This proposal having been approved by the Committee and adopted by the Council, a lithographic facsimile of "Leabhar na h-Uidhri" was prepared under the supervision of Mr. Gilbert, and published in 1870. The second manuscript selected for reproduction, which has also been produced under the supervision of Mr. Gilbert, is that known as "Leabhar Breac," which is here printed from a transcript of the original, made by Mr. Joseph O'Longan, of the Academy's Department of Irish Manuscripts, and carefully collated by him in conjunction with Professor O'Looney, M.R.I.A.

"Leabhar Breac" has been reproduced on the same principle as "Leabhar na h-Uidhri," as stated in the Preface to that work.

SAMUEL FERGUSON, V.P.,

*Chairman of the Committee of Irish Manuscripts.*

## VII

### THE ANCIENT DUBLIN MUNIMENTS<sup>1</sup>

Villa Nova, Blackrock, Dublin.

To the Editor of the *Freeman*.

SIR,

Occasional references have of late been made in the *Freeman's Journal* to the old records of the city of Dublin in the custody of the Municipal Corporation, and to the advantages which might be expected from their publication. Some of these notices might lead your readers to infer that these city muniments had hitherto been almost unknown, and that no steps had been taken towards publishing any of them. Such an inference would be not only erroneous, but unjust to the Government and the Corporation, as well as to myself. I therefore ask you to permit me to state, as briefly as possible, what has hitherto been effected in this direction. At the request of Cornelius Dennehy, Esq., and Dr. Norwood, and in compliance with the desire of Committee No. 3, expressed in the Town Clerk's letter of June 11, 1866, I inspected the Corporation muniments antecedent to 1800. I reported, on June 15, that many valuable documents were then in a most confused condition. Some were entirely obliterated from the carelessness with which they were treated in former times. Several documents of high value to the city had been long missing, and of those still extant in the possession of the Corporation there was neither catalogue nor inventory. I classed the muniments then in charge of the Corporation as follows:—

Class 1.—Original charters granted by the kings of England to the city of Dublin, commencing in 1171–2.

Class 2.—Original contemporary vellum rolls of the acts of the Council of the city from the middle of the fifteenth century.

Class 3.—Vellum and paper books containing copies and entries of various important matters in mediæval Latin and Anglo-Norman connected with the affairs, laws, and rights of the city; original rentals and accounts signed by the Mayors and city officers. In this class I include the "Chain Book" and the "Domesday Book,"

<sup>1</sup> *The Freeman's Journal*, December 26, 1877.

invaluable vellum volumes, portions of each of which were written about six hundred years ago.

Class 4.—Miscellaneous detached original documents, ranging from the fourteenth century, connected with the affairs and rights of Dublin.

Class 5.—A quantity of leases and agreements of various dates.

The suggestions which I made to the committee were as follows:—

1.—That all these documents should be stamped as the property of the Corporation of Dublin; that each charter and detached ancient instrument should be repaired, placed chronologically, and according to class.

2.—That each roll should also be repaired and placed in a zinc case, lettered externally.

3.—That translations and fair transcripts should be made of the more ancient, obscure, fragile, and decaying documents, to be bound into volumes and indexed.

4.—That a catalogue should be at once prepared of all these books and documents dating earlier than 1800, with tables of their contents and references to their locations in the Muniment Room, so that each document or volume could be at once produced when wanted.

5.—That application be made, through the city members and other members of Parliament and the President of the Royal Irish Academy, to the Treasury in London, to authorize the publication of the more important of the muniments of the Dublin Guildhall prior to the reign of Henry VIII., from the grant annually made by the House of Commons for the printing and editing of the works styled “Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland.”

This report and its recommendations were submitted to a meeting of the Town Council especially convened for their consideration by the then Lord Mayor, Sir J. W. Mackey, on June 21, 1866. By this meeting the report and recommendation were unanimously adopted, and I proceeded with the classification and arrangement of the entire collection, new metal fittings, etc., for the Muniment Room being provided by the Corporation, under the superintendence of the city engineer, Park Neville, Esq.

In compliance with the suggestions in the report, a memorial under the city seal was addressed to the Lord Lieutenant on December 9, 1866, to beg that his Excellency would be good enough to bring under the favourable consideration of the Lords Commissioners of her Majesty's Treasury the prayer of the Municipal Council of Dublin, that their lordships would be pleased to sanction, at the expense of the Treasury, the publication of a collection of the Dublin muniments. This application formed the subject of a correspondence with the Government, in consequence of which Mr. (now Sir) Thomas Duffus Hardy, Deputy Keeper of the Records in

England, by direction of the Treasury, visited the Muniment Room on April 20, 1867, and carefully inspected the documents and system of arrangement which I had adopted. Sir Thomas Hardy is admittedly the most profound and learned archivist in England, and has produced many valuable publications on history and records, which are everywhere recognized as standard works in this department of learning. He highly approved of the system of arrangement which I had adopted, and reported on the subject to the Right Hon. John Baron Romilly, then Master of the Rolls and Keeper of the Public Records of England. In this report Sir Thomas Hardy suggested the publication of a selection of these documents, to form a volume in the series entitled "Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland," issued under the authority of the Master of the Rolls in England. "This publication," he observed, he "was sure would be honourable to the Government and very acceptable to the Irish nation."

Lord Romilly reported to the Treasury in favour of this suggestion, and recommended that I should be appointed to edit the volume in the series published under his direction. This proposition was assented to by their lordships, after due consideration.

In June, 1868, I reported to Committee No. 3 that I had completed the arrangements and classification of all the documents in the Muniment Room. To it I had also transferred large numbers of city official papers which had formerly lain at the old Assembly House, William Street, and at the office of the secretary to the late Commissioners of Wide Streets. This work ensured the safety of invaluable ancient evidences of the city's rights and properties. It also secured the permanent preservation of many valuable original writings illustrating both the history of Ireland and that of her metropolis.

With the authority of the Treasury a volume of above six hundred pages, edited by me, was published in 1870, under the title of "Historical and Municipal Documents of Ireland, A.D. 1171-1320, from the Archives of the City of Dublin, etc." In this volume I supplied, from extern sources in England and elsewhere, several very valuable documents connected with the city of Dublin, the originals of which had formerly been in the city archives, whence they had disappeared in former times. Amongst these I may make special mention of the second charter of Henry II. to Dublin; the charter of Prince John in 1185, and the charter of Henry III., 1229, under which the Dublin mayoralty is constituted. The limits assigned for the work did not admit of any documents being included in it subsequently to A.D. 1320. All these documents were written in contracted Latin or Anglo-Norman, which I had to decipher, expanding the contractions grammatically, and printing in full, with epitomized translations into English. This was the first collection published of original Latin and French texts connected with the early civil history of Ireland. The history of the municipal middle

and trading classes in Ireland, under or in relation to the rule of England in the twelfth and four succeeding centuries, had previously been in almost entire obscurity. Unless in connection with the Church and the nobles, the interests of the middle and commercial classes are seldom mentioned by the annalists or chroniclers whose works formed the basis of subsequent compilations on Irish history. Authentic evidences on the subject of the history of the people can now, consequently, be gleaned only from the few existing remnants of municipal archives and correlative records which have survived to our time.

The work was rendered more than ordinarily arduous by many of the required documents being in divers and distant custodies, while all were written in contracted curial Latin or ancient French, replete with archaic technicalities.

This publication entailed no expense whatever upon the city, as its cost was defrayed by the Government.

At a meeting of the Municipal Council, held on February 7, 1871, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:—

“That the volume of historical and municipal documents from the archives of the city of Dublin, now laid before the Council, be referred to No. 3 Committee, with instructions to prepare a memorial to her Majesty’s Government, requesting that the remainder of the interesting and valuable muniments and records in the possession of the Town Council may be published without delay, and that this Council do express their satisfaction at the able manner in which Mr. Gilbert has discharged his editorial duties.”

A correspondence between the Municipal Council and the Government subsequently took place, the result of which was that the Treasury considered that the remaining Dublin archives, being of a local character and to some extent connected with the properties of the city, should be published by the Corporation itself, as had been done in similar cases in England and Scotland. Since that period the only step taken in these matters, so far as I am aware, has been the compilation of a catalogue of the expired leases belonging to the city.

Believing, however, that, when circumstances permit, the Corporation will continue the publication which was commenced by me, at the Government expense, I have prepared for the press accurate transcripts of the Dublin charters and other important ancient documents, as well as complete calendars to the city assembly rolls, with copious indices to all personal and local matters recorded on them. These works are ready for publication whenever it may be the convenience of the Corporation to make suitable arrangements for having them placed in the printer’s hands.

I remain, sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN T. GILBERT.

VIII

“THE BOOK OF LEINSTER”—REPORT<sup>1</sup>

*Royal Irish Academy Minutes of Proceedings.*

SPECIAL MEETING.

FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 18, 1879.

SIR ROBERT KANE, F.R.S., etc., President, in the Chair.

The consideration of the reports of the Council was resumed. It was resolved—“To proceed with the Report on the Editorship of the ‘Book of Leinster.’”

ON THE EDITORSHIP OF THE “BOOK OF LEINSTER.”

This report was read as follows by the Secretary of Council, who moved its adoption:—

On December 14, 1872, a resolution was passed by the Committee to the effect—

“That the President be requested to communicate to the Board of Trinity College, Dublin, that this Committee is prepared to undertake the production of a lithographic facsimile of the ‘Book of Leinster,’ similar in style to ‘Leabhar Breac’ and ‘Leabhar na h-Uidhri.’”

This resolution the Secretary was desired to communicate to the President, with a request that he would be good enough to take steps as he might deem desirable in the matter, and to inform the Committee of the result.

At this same meeting, prior to the passing of this resolution, the Committee had had laid before them “A Descriptive Catalogue of the Contents of the Book of Leinster,” by Mr. O’Looney, when the following resolution was passed:—

“That when funds are available, the Treasurer be authorized to pay Mr. O’Looney for preparing a catalogue of the contents of the ‘Book of Leinster’ such amount as shall be certified by the Secretary of the Academy and the Librarian.”

The catalogue laid on the table by Mr. O’Looney was a necessary preliminary to any recommendation on the part of this Committee

<sup>1</sup> R.I.A. Minutes, Session 1878-79, pp. 86-92.

to the Board of Trinity College to co-operate in the undertaking of this work, as the descriptive catalogue of Manuscripts in Trinity College Library does not enter into any detail of the contents of that Manuscript.

The catalogue should, by the terms of the resolution, have become the property of the Academy on payment of the sum duly certified.

The President of the Academy (Mr. Jellett) accordingly brought the motion before the Board of Trinity College on February 1, 1873, and in a letter to the Secretary of Council (Dr. Ingram) signified the assent of the Board on certain conditions.

From this period till May 23, 1874, the Committee was engaged in settling the details necessary to enable the work to be efficiently performed, as will appear from the following resolutions.

On May 17, 1873, it was resolved by the Committee—

“That the President be requested to name a day during the following week on which he could meet and confer with this Committee as to the details in connection with the purchase of the paper and lithography of the ‘Book of Leinster,’ and the other arrangements for that work.”

Accordingly, on May 21, 1873, Mr. Jellett presided at a meeting of this Committee, when the details in connection with the publication of the “Book of Leinster” were considered.

On June 14, 1873, a further resolution was passed by this Committee, to recommend Council to request the President to bring under the notice of the authorities of T.C.D. certain considerations which made it expedient that, for the purpose of transcription, the manuscript should be deposited in the Academy House.

On October 25, 1873, the President reported to this Committee that the Board of T.C.D. had consented to deposit the “Book of Leinster” in the Academy House in portions; and also that the Board had agreed to purchase in advance all the paper required for the work.

On the same day the President was requested to take the requisite steps to obtain permission for Mr. O’Longan and Mr. O’Looney to have access to the “Book of Leinster” for the purpose of putting the leaves in sequence, preparatory to commencing the copy.

On January 24, 1874, the Committee, having considered the estimates for the paper and the printing of the “Book of Leinster,” adjourned till January 28, when it was resolved—

“That a Sub-committee, consisting of the Treasurer, the Secretary of the Academy, the Secretary of Council, and the Librarian, be requested to examine and arrange all matters in connection with the purchase of the paper and the lithography of the ‘Book of Leinster.’”

On May 23, 1874, it was resolved by the Committee—

“That the sample of paper from Messrs. Pim, recommended by them, and now marked by the Chairman, be approved of for the ‘Book of Leinster.’”



Matters having been thus finally arranged, the Committee on the same day passed this further resolution—

"That the Librarian be requested to have the goodness to undertake the supervision through the press of the 'Book of Leinster,' and to arrange all details in connection with it on behalf of the Committee."

This duty Mr. Gilbert continued to fulfil until the close of the year (he was present for the last time at the meeting of December 26, 1874), but the state of his health soon after obliged him to withdraw from his Academy duties. Towards the end of the Academic Session of 1875-1876, when Mr. Gilbert, by his prolonged absence, was about to become ineligible for re-election to his seat on the Council, owing to non-attendance, the Council, in February, 1876, passed a resolution to advise the Academy to waive the by-law which made him ineligible for non-attendance. As Mr. Gilbert's advisers, however, declined to avail themselves of the offer, the matter proceeded no further, and Mr. Gilbert being thus no longer re-eligible, Dr. Atkinson was, at the Stated Meeting of March, 1876, elected by the Academy Librarian in his stead.

As from the date of his last attendance at this Committee, on December 26, 1874, up till this period of March, 1876, no communication had been received from Mr. Gilbert, and the work of transcription of the "Book of Leinster" had remained entirely without any other supervision than that exercised by members of this Committee, the Committee, feeling the necessity of some responsible personal superintendence over the work, passed a resolution on April 22, 1876—

"That the Librarian be requested to supervise the publication of the 'Book of Leinster' in its passage through the press; and, on the completion of the work, to prepare such prefatory matter as may seem to him suitable as an introduction to the work."

By this resolution, Dr. Atkinson, designated under his then official title as Librarian, was instructed to prepare an introduction to the work on its completion, without any special direction as to the nature or contents of such preface.

The following extract from the *Proceedings* of the Academy, taken from a paper of Professor O'Looney, read January 13, 1873, "On the Book of Leinster," points naturally to the source whence information ought to have been available:—

"The want of a descriptive catalogue of the contents of so important a book as that of 'Leinster' has long been felt, and to supply this, I have now the honour to submit one in which I have endeavoured to specify every piece to be found in the manuscript, noting in all instances the page, column, and line where the composition commences, and giving the title or first line of each piece."

This paper, it will be observed, was read before the Academy

prior to the acceptance by the Board of Trinity College of the proposal to lithograph the "Book of Leinster."

The work, at the time of Dr. Atkinson's appointment, had advanced during the few months of Mr. Gilbert's supervision, and during his prolonged absence, as far as page 192 of the facsimile.

Mr. Gilbert's state of health having permitted him to resume his occupations, and the year during which he remained ineligible under the by-law having expired, his name was replaced on the list of eligibles for Council, and on his re-election as a member of Council on March 16, 1878, Dr. Atkinson voluntarily resigned the Librarianship in order that Mr. Gilbert might be, as he was, re-elected to that office. Dr. Atkinson did not, however, regard himself as freed from the duties imposed on him by the resolution of April 22, 1876, and continued to supervise and conduct the preparation of the "Book of Leinster" for the press, as from the date of his appointment to that duty, with the full concurrence of the Committee.

Towards the end of last year, however, when the work of transcription was nearly completed, and there remained the important task of preparing the introduction, Mr. Gilbert, alleging that, as Librarian, he was the proper person to discharge the duty of supervising the "Book of Leinster," under the terms of the resolution of April 22, 1876, demanded of Dr. Atkinson that he should withdraw from the performance of that duty. There had been several meetings of the Committee during the year, at which Mr. Gilbert had been present, in one of which an important matter bearing on the "Book of Leinster" had been considered without any objection being made by Mr. Gilbert to the action of Dr. Atkinson in supervising the work.

Upon learning from Mr. Gilbert for the first time that he considered himself wronged in the matter, Dr. Atkinson at once brought this state of facts under the notice of Council at their next meeting, December 2, 1878, declaring his willingness to withdraw if it were decided that he had been entrusted with the duty merely in his capacity of Librarian; but, otherwise, expressing his desire to continue and complete the work with which he had been charged by the resolution of the Committee. Council on that occasion directed that a report should be made of all the resolutions passed in reference to the editorship of the "Book of Leinster." This report was accordingly prepared and presented at the meeting of January 20, 1879, to the Council, who decided that it should be referred to this Committee, as involving a matter primarily within their jurisdiction. Accordingly, in pursuance of this reference, the Committee took the report into their consideration, and passed the following resolution:—

"That by their resolution of April 22, 1876, this Committee appointed Dr. Atkinson, therein described by his then official designation of Librarian, to supervise the publication of the 'Book of Leinster' in its passage through the press, and, on the completion

of the work, to prepare such prefatory matter as might seem to him suitable as an introduction to the work ;

“That such duty was entrusted to him on the ground of his personal fitness to discharge it, and not in his official character as Librarian for the time being ; and

“That the Committee therefore consider that Dr. Atkinson continues to be still charged with the duties so entrusted to him.”

Mr. Gilbert has not, however, accepted their construction of their own resolution, and does not withdraw his claims.

Dr. Atkinson, being thus authoritatively recognized as the responsible editor, then took steps to prepare his introduction to the work, and accordingly, as was natural, applied to Professor O’Looney to be furnished with the catalogue referred to in the minutes of December 14, 1872, and which had been submitted by him to the Academy in the year 1873, and which, therefore, should have been in the possession of the Academy. Professor O’Looney, who had up to this time, Dr. Atkinson informs the Committee, worked harmoniously under his supervision, declined to furnish the catalogue. On this refusal being made known to the Committee, they passed a resolution on February 15, 1879—

“That, observing in the minutes that a descriptive catalogue of the ‘Book of Leinster’ by Professor O’Looney was laid before the Committee on December 14, 1872, Professor O’Looney be requested to send in now that catalogue to the Committee, and also to furnish the certificate of Dr. Sullivan and Mr. Gilbert as to the amount payable for it ; and that a copy of this resolution (together with a copy of the minute above referred to, and the resolution thereon) be communicated to Professor O’Looney, with a request that he will be good enough to let the Committee have his answer before or at its meeting on February 22.”

To this request of the Committee Professor O’Looney refused to accede, in a letter of February 22, in which he alleged as follows :—

“Having prepared the present work to accompany the Academy’s edition of the ‘Book of Leinster,’ I submitted it to the Irish Manuscripts Committee, and it was approved by the Committee at its meeting on December 14, 1872, as appears from the minutes and resolutions of the Committee. I now only await the requisite order to put it to press as on the former occasions.

“With reference to the certificates for payment which your Committee asks me to send in, there will be no difficulty when the work is in print.”

The Committee, finding no such acceptance of an introduction in their minutes, and recognizing the impropriety of incurring expenses in printing a document that had never been submitted to the inspection of the responsible editor, and of the nature, extent, and execution of which he had consequently no means of judging, informed Professor O’Looney that if the catalogue, as prepared by

him, were not furnished by a given day, Dr. Atkinson would be requested to proceed with the work with such materials as are at his command.

The time fixed having expired, and the catalogue not having been brought in by Professor O'Looney, Dr. Atkinson, in pursuance of the direction of the Committee, began his preparation of the introduction without the assistance of Professor O'Looney's catalogue. In order to facilitate the performance of this lengthy task, Dr. Atkinson gave certain directions to the Academy's scribe, Mr. O'Longan, whereupon Mr. Gilbert personally interposed, and told Mr. O'Longan that, in his opinion, Dr. Atkinson had no right to interfere. On this interposition being reported to the Council, Mr. Gilbert made a statement at the Council table that he was himself now engaged in printing an introduction to the publication. If this preface be either the document prepared by Professor O'Looney or founded upon it, as Professor O'Looney, in his letter of February 22, explicitly asked leave from this Committee to put his catalogue to the press as an introduction to the work, the Committee do not undertake to explain this statement of Mr. Gilbert of his wholly unauthorized printing of such prefatory matter.

The Committee having, on the application of Dr. Atkinson, authorized Mr. O'Longan to transcribe the headings of several tracts and articles in the "Book of Leinster," that work is being proceeded with by Mr. O'Longan, without further interference from Mr. Gilbert.

The entire work is now lithographed, though not finally revised. It contains 401 pages, of which upwards of 200 have been carried on under the supervision of Dr. Atkinson, while the preceding pages, from 74-193, were, owing to the absence of Mr. Gilbert, and the reluctance of the Committee to take any action so long as there remained any hope of Mr. Gilbert's being able to resume his duties, left without any direct responsible supervision.

Council has directed that it be intimated to the Academy's printer, that no printing in connection with the "Book of Leinster" will be regarded as done on the credit of the Academy unless sanctioned by the Manuscripts Committee.

Whereupon the following amendment was proposed by Dr. Hayden, and seconded by Dr. Madden:—

"That the Academy consider it desirable that all the arrangements requisite to complete the publication of the 'Book of Leinster,' including the Introduction and preliminary matter, shall continue to be entrusted to the present Librarian of the Academy, under whose supervision the undertaking was commenced; that the Council be requested to afford him all requisite facilities within their power for the satisfactory execution of the work, and that the report now presented to the Academy be referred back to the Council for reconsideration in the foregoing respects."

A division was taken, and it appeared that there were 56 votes against the amendment, and 26 votes for it.

The President having declared the amendment lost, the original motion for the adoption of the report was put, and declared carried.

*The following passages are taken from the minutes of the Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, with reference to the publication of the "Book of Leinster":—*

1874. *March 16.—General Meeting. Annual Report.*

"Important work continues to be carried on under supervision of the Librarian [Mr. Gilbert] in the department of Irish Manuscripts. The arrangements for the production of an edition of the 'Book of Leinster,' by the joint action of the Academy and of Trinity College, have been concluded, and the work has been commenced. From specimens of it now before you, there is every reason to expect that it will be carried out satisfactorily."

1874. *November 9.—Address of the President, William Stokes, M.D.*

"The 'Book of Leinster,' from the Library of Trinity College, is now in the hands of the transcribers, under the superintendence of our Librarian [Mr. Gilbert]."

1875. *March 16.—General Meeting. Annual Report.*

"The work of transcribing and lithographing ancient Irish texts continues to be carried on under the supervision of our Librarian, Mr. Gilbert. A facsimile transcript of the 'Book of Leinster' has been executed, as far as page 100."

*Statement made by the Librarian, J. T. Gilbert, with reference to the reproduction of the "Book of Leinster" on the occasion of the Special Meeting of the Royal Irish Academy, April 18, 1879.*

The reproduction of our chief ancient manuscripts in the Irish language in lithographic facsimile was originated by me, as Librarian of the Academy. In this way I successfully completed the reproduction of "Leabhar na h'Uidhri" and "Leabhar Breac." I was then, by the Committee of Irish Manuscripts, requested to undertake the supervision through the press of the "Book of Leinster," and to arrange all details in connection with it on behalf of the Committee. Under this authority I laid down the plan for the execution of the entire work, each page of which was to be carefully collated by Professor O'Looney, whose valuable descriptive catalogue of the contents was revised by me, with the intention of having it prefixed to the volume. In the Annual Report presented to the Academy

in March, 1875, the Council stated as follows, in reference to my labours on the "Book of Leinster:"—

"The work of transcribing and lithographing ancient Irish texts continues to be carried on under the supervision of our Librarian, Mr. Gilbert. A facsimile transcript of the 'Book of Leinster' has been executed as far as page 100."

Shortly after this period the state of my health obliged me to relinquish all literary work for some time, and Dr. Atkinson was elected Librarian of the Academy in my place. The Committee of Irish Manuscripts subsequently passed a resolution entrusting the care of the "Book of Leinster" to the new Librarian of the Academy. After my return, Dr. Atkinson, at a public meeting of the Academy, resigned the Librarianship, and I was re-elected to the office. As he made no reservation whatever in relation to the "Book of Leinster," I concluded that my re-election replaced that work also in my care, more especially as no instance is on record of work of this class having been done here by any but the Librarian of the Academy. I found that this view of the case was also entertained by a distinguished vice-president of the Academy, and by several eminent members, who urged me not to abandon a work for which they conceived I was responsible as Librarian of the Academy, under their vote which replaced me in my original position. It is also to be borne in mind that the Librarian is the officer, not of the Council or of Committee, but of the Academy at large.

It would have been desirable that the printed report in our hands should have given the names of those who, under the designation of the "Irish Manuscripts Committee," are referred to as having certified to the personal fitness of an editor of works on Irish history in the Irish language. Had their names been placed before the Academy, it would have been seen that none of these gentlemen who undertook to deliver this judgment have ever printed any volume on the Irish language, or any other work in that line, which would entitle them to be accepted as authorities on such a subject. Dr. Atkinson, to whose personal fitness they have testified, has never, so far as I am aware, published any volume on the language or history of Ireland. This, of course, is not meant in any way to disparage the acquirements of these gentlemen in other departments.

I have only to add that, so far as I am personally concerned, there is no emolument whatever connected with the work on the "Book of Leinster," and that throughout the entire affair I have been influenced solely by a sense of public duty.

Names of the members of the Irish Manuscripts Committee who passed the resolution as to the "personal fitness" of the proposed editor of the "Book of Leinster" on January 25, 1879—

REV. M. H. CLOSE.	SIR S. FERGUSON.
W. J. O'DONNAN.	J. K. INGRAM.
A. G. RICHEY.	

## IX

### THE CUNNINGHAM FUND

#### *Protest.*

Royal Irish Academy House, 19, Dawson Street,  
Dublin, January 14, 1878.

We, the undersigned members of the Corporate Body of the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, desire hereby to place on record our objections to and protest against the course proposed to be adopted for the purpose of effecting alterations in the provisions of the will of Timothy Cunningham, who bequeathed to this Academy the sum of one thousand pounds, the interest on which he desired should be disposed of in such premiums as the members of the Academy shall think proper, for the improvement of natural knowledge, and other objects of their institution.

We dissent from the allegation put forward in the name of the Council of this Academy—that deserving recipients are not to be found in Ireland for premiums out of the Cunningham Fund; and were it not invidious, we could here mention several distinguished gentlemen whose labours are eminently entitled to such recognition and reward.

We do not agree with the statement that difficulties exist in carrying out the intentions of the testator, and we are of opinion that adequate measures have not hitherto been taken to make known publicly the existence of such a fund, and its being available to those engaged in the cultivation of science, literature, and archæology.

We believe that the proposed allocation of any portion of this fund to the printing of *Transactions* or *Proceedings* of this Academy would be an unwise and impolitic deviation from the intentions of the testator, and one which would tend to weaken public confidence in the institution, and possibly have the effect of preventing other bequests to this Academy.

We protest against the course adopted of seeking to interfere with any portion of our corporate funds, without having, in the first instance, submitted the matter to the decision of all the members of our body, resident both in Dublin and elsewhere. Such an interference we consider to be contrary to the laws, regulations, and usages of the Academy, and of other corporate bodies, and if

permitted to pass unnoticed, one likely to form a precedent perilous to the interests of the members at large.

We consider that by adopting proper steps, and without making any change whatever in the terms of the bequest, the Cunningham Fund might be administered so as effectively to promote the higher branches of science, literature, and archæology among our countrymen, by a liberal but judicious allocation of the interest in the form of premiums, to be awarded from time to time.

We desire that this, our statement, shall be placed on record on the minutes of the Academy, and of the Council; that the Secretary of the Academy shall forward a copy of it to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, who, under our charter, is the Official Visitor of the Academy; and that copies of it shall also be sent officially, by the Secretary, to the Right Hon. the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and to the Right Hon. the Master of the Rolls in Ireland.

GRANARD.

O'CONNOR DON, M.P.

HENRY HENNESSY,

Fellow of the Royal Society of London;  
late Vice-President of the Royal Irish  
Academy.

JOHN T. GILBERT,

Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, London;  
late Member of the Council and  
Librarian of the Royal Irish Academy.

S. M. MACSWINEY, M.D.,

Fellow of the College of Physicians in  
Ireland.

T. MORE MADDEN, M.D.

WILLIAM HELLIER BAILEY,

Fellow of the Linnæan Society, etc.

WILLIAM JOHN FITZPATRICK,  
J.P., LL.D.

PARKE NEVILLE, C.E.

JOHN O'RORKE, P.P.

H. LEONARD,

Fellow of the Geological Society.

A. HANEGAN.

JOHN O'HANLON, C.C.

GEORGE CHARLES GARNETT,  
M.A., T.C.D.

PATRICK F. MORAN, D.D.,

Bishop of Ossory.‡

R. R. MADDEN, F.R.C.S.E.

JOHN CASEY, LL.D.,

Fellow of the Royal Society of London,  
and Member of the Council of the Royal  
Irish Academy

JOHN CORNELIUS O'CALLA-  
GHAN.

JAMES STEWART, M.A.; Cantab.

BRIAN O'LOONEY,  
Professor of Irish, C.U.I.

JOHN CAMPBELL, M.B., T.C.D.

JAMES APJOHN, M.D.,  
Late Vice-President of the Academy.

W. H. HARDINGE,

Late Member of the Council and Treasurer  
of the Royal Irish Academy.

W. K. SULLIVAN, LL.D.

President Queen's College, Cork; late  
Secretary of the Royal Irish Academy.

A. FITZGIBBON, C.E., London.

ULICK J. BOURKE,  
President of St. Jarlath's College, Tuam.

ROBERT DAY, Junior, Cork.

J. J. MACCARTHY, R.H.A.

SYLVESTER MALONE, P.P.

GILBERT SANDERS.

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

GEORGE SIGERSON, M.D.

MAURICE LENIHAN, J.P., Lime-  
rick.

W. H. STACPOOLE WESTROPP.

M. I. KILGARRIFF, F.R.C.S.I.

J. J. O'CALLAGHAN, F.R.I.A.I.

GEORGE FOTTRELL, Junior.

WILLIAM FRAZER, F.R.C.S.I.

WILLIAM DILLON.



## CUNNINGHAM FUND—DECISION OF THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS.

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE IN IRELAND.<sup>1</sup>*Chancery Division.*

## MASTER OF THE ROLLS.

In the Matter of the Royal Irish Academy, and in the Matter of the 52nd Geo. 3, c. 101, intituled "An Act to provide a Summary Remedy in case of Abuse of Trusts created for Charitable Purposes."

SCHEME for the regulation and management of the bequest of one thousand pounds made by the will of TIMOTHY CUNNINGHAM, formerly Gray's Inn, in the county of Middlesex, dated tenth June, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-nine, to the ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY, for the purpose of being disposed of in such premiums as the said Academy should think proper, for the improvement of natural knowledge, and other objects of their Institution, and of the stocks and funds now representing such bequest.

The said bequest, with the interest and dividends, which have from time to time been added thereto, amounting to the sum of two thousand six hundred and eighteen pounds, nine shillings, and five-pence, Government new Three per cent. Stock, now standing in the books of the Governor and Company of the Bank of Ireland, in the name of the ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY, after payment thereof of the costs of the proceedings in this Matter, and order herein, shall henceforward constitute and be called "The Cunningham Bequest Fund."

The Annual Income of said fund shall be applied as follows :—

1st. In premiums of an honorary character, such as medals and other marks of distinction of a like nature, to be awarded from time to time by the Council, for the time being, of the ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY, to persons rendering eminent services in the improvement of knowledge in Science, Polite Literature, or Antiquities.

2nd. In pecuniary premiums, to be awarded, from time to time, by said Council to the authors of the best Essays (by said Council considered worthy of such premiums) upon subjects connected with Science, Polite Literature, or Antiquities, such subjects to be proposed by said Council, when and in such manner as they shall think fit.

<sup>1</sup> R.I.A. Minutes, Session 1878-79, pp. 93-95.

3rd. In the publication, under the title of "CUNNINGHAM PRIZE MEMOIRS," of such Papers in Science, Polite Literature, or Antiquities, communicated to the Academy, as, in the opinion of the said Council, may possess eminent merit.

4th. If, after providing for the several purposes aforesaid, any balance of said annual income shall remain undisposed of, same shall be applied for the purpose of increasing future pecuniary premiums, to be awarded under clause two, as the said Council shall think most expedient.

Dated this 16th day of December, 1878.

EDWARD SULLIVAN, M.R.

Filed 11th of March, 1879.

SIR HUMPHREY GILBERT<sup>1</sup>

Sir Humphrey Gilbert, soldier and navigator, born in 1539, was the second son of Otho Gilbert, of Compton, Devonshire. Sir Walter Raleigh was his step-brother. He was educated at Eton and Oxford, and applied himself to the study of navigation and the art of war. He served under Sir Henry Sidney in Ireland, and was knighted by him at Drogheda, January 1, 1570. He married Anne, daughter of Sir Anthony Ager, of Kent, by whom he had five sons and one daughter. In 1571 he was returned as M.P. for Plymouth. In the autumn of 1572 Gilbert was sent to the Netherlands with an expedition which failed. For the next five years, 1573-8, Gilbert lived in retirement at Limehouse, and was visited by George Gascoigne, the poet. Here he wrote the "Discourse of a Discovery for a New Passage to Cataia," and a treatise about "Newfoundland and the West Indies."

In June, 1583, Gilbert sailed out of Plymouth Sound with a fleet of five ships — the *Delight*, *Raleigh*, *Golden Hind*, *Swallow*, and *Squirrel*. In July he sighted Newfoundland, and in August went ashore and took possession of the harbour of St. John in the Queen's name, and thus planted the first English colony in North America.

Gilbert left St. John with other ships on August 20 with the object of searching the coast towards the South, and on August 29 the ship *Delight* struck aground and was lost, with the learned Hungarian, Stephen Parmenius. Gilbert then changed his course for England, and on September 9, in the afternoon, after a storm south of the Azores, he was seen sitting abaft the *Squirrel* with a book in his hand. Whenever he came near the *Hind*, he was heard to utter the well-known words, "We are as near to heaven by sea as by land."

At midnight the watch on board the *Golden Hind*, observing the lights of the *Squirrel* to disappear suddenly, cried out, "The general was cast away!" which was too true; for in that moment the frigate was devoured and swallowed up of the sea.

Although usually described as a navigator, Gilbert was more of a soldier than a seaman.

Another of his treatises was written probably at Limehouse, entitled "The Erection of (Queen Elizabethes) Achademy in London for Education of her Majesties Wardes and others the youth of nobility and gentlemen." From a literary point of view, it adds more to Gilbert's fame as a gentleman and a scholar, than anything he ever undertook either as a soldier or a colonist.

<sup>1</sup> "Dictionary of National Biography," vol. xxi., p. 327.

## XI

### COSTELLO FAMILY

The family of Costello derives name and lineage from Hostilio, second son of Gilbert de Angulo, one of the knights who accompanied Strongbow in his invasion of Ireland. The eldest son, Jocelyn, took the name of Nangle, and his line settled there, assuming the title of putative Barons of Navan. Hostilio accompanied his father on an expedition to Meath, but returning to Connaught, his country became known as Mac Hostilio's country, his descendants gradually acquiring the name of Costello, with the popular title of Lords of Ballyhaunis. The family owned three castles, built for them by William de Lacy. On the occasion of a commission being despatched by Elizabeth to ascertain the extent of Mac Costello's country, the commissioners returned, unable to fulfil their mission, "through the hard passage and travel thither, by means of the great bogs, woods, moors, and mountains, and other evil ways in and to the same barony."

Some of the family left the country in Cromwell's time, became Grandees of Spain, and entered the army of the King of Spain, notably one Dudley Costello, who, returning to Ireland, was murdered in the mountains. A romantic history remains of Dudley's son, who was sheltered by his humble foster-father, and brought up as the poor man's son. The estates of Costello having been given to the planted Dillons, a price was set on the young Irish-Spaniard's head. The knightly conduct and daring of the youth attracting notice, his foster-father, in a burst of pride, confessed his ancient lineage, whereupon young Dudley Costello asserted his right, and fought and killed Tobias Dillon, who was commissioned to destroy him. The young hero of the tale was himself killed some months later by a fall from his horse, near the pass of Ballagh-a-derreen, and the barony of Costello remained with the Dillons. The mother of George Canning was a Costello, whose father settled in Dublin in the eighteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Notes gathered from "Norman and Celtic Pedigrees in Ireland," by John D'Alton, B.L. Dublin, 1847.

## XII

### “CHRONICLES AND MEMORIALS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.”—MASTER OF THE ROLLS’ SERIES

*Memorandum made by Sir John T. Gilbert on Grants by Parliament,  
for the Master of the Rolls’ Series, May 6, 1898.*

The question is frequently asked, why is there no complete and accurate history of Ireland? As partly answering this inquiry, the following explanation may be given.

It is not generally known that the majority of the original records of the Anglo-Normans in Ireland have been lost. Several authentic documents elucidating affairs in Ireland at the period of the Anglo-Norman settlement, and illustrating various stages and incidents of it, are, however, extant in chartularies or registers of monasteries in which they were entered, for security, in former ages.

So many of the registers have perished that at present only four of them are known to exist. They are those of St. Mary’s, St. Thomas, the Hospital of St. John, Dublin, and the Priory of Tristernagh in Meath. They are written in obscure, contracted Latin, intelligible only to experts in palæography.

The first of these—that of St. Mary’s Abbey—has been edited by Sir John Gilbert in the Rolls’ Series, and one portion of that of St. Thomas has also appeared in the same series. To complete the entire of the registers it would be only requisite to publish about three further volumes of similar size. These publications would supply the chief authentic documents now extant for elucidating the history of Ireland in the period to which they belong. Of each of the manuscripts there exists only a single copy, and its loss to history through any casualty would be irretrievable.

That Ireland has reasonable ground for seeking the Governmental publication of these important materials towards the elucidation of her authentic history will, it is submitted, appear from the following details as to what has been done at the expense of the United Kingdom.

In 1857 the Treasury sanctioned the undertaking of an expenditure, subject to annual votes from the House of Commons, for

the publication of Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the middle ages; each book to be entrusted to a qualified editor selected by the Master of the Rolls in England, under special regulations.

This undertaking, styled the "Rolls' Series," was begun in 1858, and has been continued to the present time. The requisite funds have been included under a sub-head in the annual estimate submitted to the House of Commons for the Public Record Office, London, of which the Master of the Rolls in England is head.

The total number of volumes issued and in progress in the Rolls' Series for Great Britain and Ireland from the commencement in 1858 to the year 1898 has been 230.

Of these there were for England 219 volumes.  
 " " " Ireland 11 "

Supposing Ireland to have been allowed one-third of what has been thus expended, she should have had 73 volumes. From this number, deducting the above 11, there would be a balance of 62 volumes yet to be published for Ireland by Government.

The late Sir Edward Sullivan, when Master of the Rolls in Ireland, proposed to the Treasury to authorize the publication of a series of historic materials and documents for Ireland, to be carried on under direction of the Master of the Rolls in Ireland, subject to regulations similar to those sanctioned by Government for England and Scotland. Sir Edward Sullivan at the same time recommended some manuscripts of the early Anglo-Norman period in Ireland which he proposed should be edited by Sir John Gilbert, LL.D., F.S.A., who had edited for Government the "Facsimiles of National Manuscripts of Ireland," as well as three volumes of Anglo-Norman and Latin documents connected with Ireland, in the Master of the Rolls' Series. In view of the recommendation, Sir John Gilbert prepared some manuscripts of this class for the press, a work involving much labour, requiring special qualifications and proficiency in mediæval writings, historic literature, and paleography.

The sudden death of Sir Edward Sullivan, and other circumstances, impeded further progress till the subject was again brought before the Treasury by the present Master of the Rolls in Ireland.

In reply to his communications, the Treasury intimated their unwillingness to have a separate series of historic publications for Ireland, and stated that any Governmental work of that class should be under direction of the Master of the Rolls in England.

The want of authentic materials for the history of the early Anglo-Norman settlement in Ireland, and the non-inclusion of materials on that subject in the Rolls' Series, caused considerable public dissatisfaction. Some of the points connected with this matter of non-publication were commented on in letters in the *Times*. They were also brought under notice in the House of

Commons, and a promise was given there by Mr. Jackson, Secretary of the Treasury, that the subject should have the attention of the Government. The result was that, under the direction of the Master of the Rolls in England, and with the sanction of the Treasury, Sir John Gilbert was authorized to edit a valuable manuscript, which in former times had been removed from Dublin to the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

This was one of the registers of the Abbey of St. Thomas, Dublin, founded by King Henry II. in honour of St. Thomas à Becket. The register contained part of a collection, made about the year 1260, of documents connected with Ireland in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. This publication, issued in the Rolls' Series in 1889, was very favourably received by the press and the public. Its contents have been repeatedly referred to in every work since published on Ireland in connection with the times to which the register relates.

The editor, in the preface (p. xviii.), specially mentioned that another volume would be requisite to complete the historic materials in the first volume.

For authority to proceed with the printing of the concluding volume and of another unique collection of correlative documents, application was duly made to the Master of the Rolls in England, but the requisite permission could not be given until the Treasury sanctioned the insertion of the allocation in proper form in the estimates for the year, and this has not as yet been done.

It has been stated that the Treasury desires that the Rolls' Series should be brought to a close, that no new work has been lately undertaken in it, but that such of the publications as are incomplete are to be at once finished. Under this arrangement would obviously come the completion of the above-named register of the Abbey of Saint Thomas. However proper the termination of publications in the Rolls' Series concerning England may be, it cannot be satisfactory to Ireland, which, as appears above, has had very small share of the grants annually voted by the House of Commons for Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland.

As an item of the public expenditure of the country the amount of cost of the entire work would be trivial.

The position of Ireland in this matter may be contrasted with that of Scotland, which for many years past has been given £1000, per annum, under vote of the House of Commons, for the publication of Scottish historical records; and in the present year, 1898, a Governmental allocation of £450, for work on Welsh manuscripts, appears in the Civil Service Estimates.

On consideration of the foregoing statement, it is hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer may be able to see his way towards having the requisite steps taken for having the very moderate allocation requisite to complete the above-named work for Ireland included

in the Civil Service Estimates, under the same head as that under which sanction was given for the portion already executed.

EXTRACTS FROM CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES FOR 1898-9.

Page 150. Public Record Office, London.

Out of £3200, for calendars and historical documents there is only £210, set down for Ireland for preparing Calendar of State Papers (1625-1679) in London Office.

Page 262. Scotland.

Allowance for publication of calendars, chronicles, memorials, and Scottish historical records, £1000.



### XIII

## IRISH BIBLIOGRAPHY

### *Two Papers by Sir John T. Gilbert, LL.D.*

The following papers,<sup>1</sup> which were contributed by the late Sir John T. Gilbert, LL.D., on separate occasions to meetings of the Royal Irish Academy, were written by this eminent authority in what proved to be the closing part of his life, and were, it is evident, in the nature of introductory papers on a subject of considerable importance and considerable extent.

The two papers form parts of the one subject—the second being a continuation of the first to a later period.

They are now published from the original manuscripts which the author had before him at the time when they were read. In reading them, Sir John T. Gilbert, it is believed, supplemented his manuscript occasionally by verbal communications ; but unfortunately, as far as the first paper is concerned, the report that appeared in the daily papers the next day is extremely meagre, and not entirely accurate. Neither paper has hitherto appeared in the *Proceedings*, owing to the fact that the author intended to add to them, or to contribute further to the subject ; but before that could be done his life was suddenly ended. The Council of the Academy having obtained possession of these manuscripts, retained them for a considerable time, as appears from the dates, in the hope that as the papers and books of Sir John T. Gilbert were being examined and gone through after his death by others, further materials in manuscript might be found which would add to the value of these contributions. Unfortunately nothing of the kind has appeared up to the present time, or is now ever likely to appear.

On the occasions when these papers were read, there were exhibited by the author some photographs of title-pages or other pages out of some of the works particularly mentioned by him.

In his second paper, Sir J. T. Gilbert refers to an Appendix in which he gave particulars of the productions of some Irish typographers other than the King's printer. This Appendix is not now forthcoming.

<sup>1</sup> *R.I.A. Proceedings*, vol. xxv., Section C., pp. 117-142.

## FIRST PAPER.

Read June 22, 1896.

It is to be regretted that no comprehensive work has yet been published on Irish Bibliography from the time of the invention of printing to the nineteenth century. An Irish Bibliography should, I submit, contain precise details in relation to the printed works of Irish authors as well as in reference to publications in connection with Ireland, or printed in Ireland. The preparation of such a bibliography would be an undertaking of more than ordinary difficulty. Many important works by Irish authors, or in relation to Ireland, were written in Latin, French, or Italian, printed on the Continent, and are now rare, costly, and in some cases unobtainable. To read here a catalogue of books, with minute particulars in connection with each of them, would probably be deemed tedious, but perhaps some brief particulars on the subject may not be uninteresting.

There does not appear to have been any printing in Ireland till 1551, when a volume, hereafter noticed, was produced in Dublin. Many years before 1551 works of Irish writers were published on the Continent. Among these was that entitled "Manipulus Florum"—"Handful of Flowers"—by Thomas de Hibernis, printed at Piacenza in 1483. This very elegant specimen of typography is a small folio volume, printed in double columns, with the initial and capital letters painted red and blue. Towards the close of the fifteenth century one of the most important printing offices in Venice—that of Ottaviano Schott—was under the supervision of an Irishman, Maurice O'Fihely, known on the Continent as "Mauricius Hybernicus," or "de portu," from the harbour of Baltimore, lands in the vicinity of which belonged to his sept. [Works of O'Fihely were printed at Ferrara in 1499, and at Venice in 1501.] O'Fihely acted as Professor at Padua with great reputation, and was subsequently appointed Archbishop of Tuam. [Two of his books, printed in 1501 at Venice, are now laid on the table.] Prefixed to one of his works was "Mauritio Hibernico: divinarum humanarumque rerum interpreti eminentissimo."

The first book printed in Ireland—already referred to—was the Book of Common Prayer, etc., after the use of the Church of England, published by Humphrey Powell in 1551. The printing is in black letter, and the volume contains 140 leaves, exclusive of calendar, rubrics, and introductory matter. Powell had previously carried on printing work in London at his "dwelling above Holborn Conduit."

Through the kindness of Dr. Abbott, Librarian of Trinity College, Dublin, I am enabled to lay before the Academy reproductions of the first and last pages of Powell's volume. I am indebted to Mr. Greenwood Pim for the photographs, which are in a size smaller than that of the pages of the original book.

The first book printed in the Irish language appeared at Dublin in 1571. It is a small volume of fifty-four pages, each page containing on an average twenty-three lines. The contents—entirely in the Irish language—are an introduction to the Irish language, Catechism of the Church of England, forms of prayer, and other religious matters. The translations from English and Latin are stated on the title-page to have been made by John O’Kearney. The title-page also tells us that the book was printed at the cost of John Ussher, Alderman of Dublin, at the head of the Bridge, with the privilege of the great Queen Elizabeth. [Kearney, the translator, was treasurer of the Cathedral of St. Patrick, Dublin, and in his translations from the Irish he is said to have been assisted by Nicholas Walsh, Bishop of Ossory.]

Of this book no copy is to be found in Ireland. Through the liberality of the Curator of the Bodleian Library, and the kindness of Mr. F. Madan, I am able to lay before the meeting facsimiles of the title and other pages of this very rare book.

Some time since, on examining the papers of Archbishop Parker in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, a broadside came to light, containing an Irish poem printed in the same year and in the same house with the book I have just described. The subject of the poem is the Day of Judgment, and the author’s name is given at head as . . . MacCrossan. Neither the poem nor its author is mentioned in any [of] our books. To the authorities at Cambridge I am indebted for the photograph of the poem now laid before you.

Having, I fear, detained the meeting too long, I shall only ask leave to add a few observations on books printed before 1600 which contain notices in relation to Ireland.

Of these one of the earliest is the “Dita Mvndi” of Fazio Uberti, printed at Florence and Vicenza towards the middle of the fifteenth century.

It is not generally known that Giovanni Battista Giraldi Cinthio, the eminent Italian dramatist and novelist, composed a tragedy in five acts, the scene of which he laid in Limerick, described as “Limirico città nobile d’Hibernia.” Among the *dramatis personæ* were the King of Ireland, his general, chamberlain, and herald. The chorus was composed of men of Limerick. This tragedy, entitled “Arrenopia,” was printed at Venice in 1583, with the portrait of the author on the back of the title-page.

The last publication I shall here mention is one consisting only of four leaves, and of which but one copy is known to exist. It was printed at Rome in 1596, and entitled “Relatione della guerra d’Hibernia.” The main subject is a victory obtained by the Earl of Tyrone over Sir John Norris, Gerent for England. Norris is described as a captain of great experience. The Earl of Tyrone the writer mentions as now styled “il gran principe Dioneel.”

## SECOND PAPER.

Read June 14, 1897.

At a former meeting I communicated to the Academy some details of Irish bibliography from the time of the introduction of printing to the year 1599.

I now propose to bring under your notice some particulars in relation to Irish bibliography in the seventeenth century.

This undertaking demands a greater amount of labour and investigation than might be supposed, as no work on Irish bibliography of that period has hitherto appeared in print, and most of the publications referred to are of great rarity.

In the seventeenth century the subject may be considered under the heads of publications issued in Ireland, in Great Britain, and on the Continent.

During the greater part of the seventeenth century there was little printing in Ireland, except that which was carried on at Dublin. Under patent from the Crown a government official, designated "the King's Printer for Ireland," possessed a monopoly of printing, book-binding and bookselling in Ireland, with authority to exact heavy penalties from any persons who infringed his rights.

The first King's Printer for Ireland was John Frankton, who, in 1604, obtained from James I. an appointment of that office for life.

Frankton's most important publications were versions of the New Testament and Book of Common Prayer in the Irish language, and the Reports of Sir John Davis in law French.

In succession to Frankton as King's Printer for Ireland, and on the recommendation of the Society of Stationers of London, a patent for the office of printer general for Ireland was in 1618 granted to Felix Kingston, Matthew Lownes, and Bartholomew Downes, styled in the patent "citizens and stationers of London." Acting on behalf of the London Society of Stationers, these patentees erected suitable buildings at Dublin, with printing presses; and Kingston, with others from London, commenced their labours with the publication in 1620 of a folio volume of "The Statutes of Ireland," with the imprint—

"Dublin, Printed by the Companie of Stationers of the Citie of London, Printers to the King's most excellent Majestie. Anno 1620. Cum privilegio regiae majestatis."

In the following year "The Covntesse of Pembrokes Arcadia. Written by Sir Philip Sidney, Knight," was issued in folio with the imprint—

"*DVBLIN*, Printed by the Societie of STATIONERS. 1621.  
*Cum Privilegio.*"

With the same imprint there were subsequently published at

Dublin works by Sir James Ware, James Ussher, Sir Richard Bolton, and Thomas Randolph. The post of King's Printer in Ireland was held in 1642 by William Bladen, who, in 1644, issued at Dublin an edition of the Psalter in English, now difficult to find. In 1643 the Irish Confederation established printing presses at Kilkenny and Waterford, then under their jurisdiction, and appointed Thomas Bourke as their chief printer. The type and machinery for these presses appear to have been brought from Flanders. After Dublin came under the rule of the Parliament of England Bladen was still employed to execute the Governmental printing in Ireland. He was prohibited from printing any matter without the sanction of the Council of State.

On the restoration of Charles II. the office of King's Printer in Ireland was granted to John Croke, a London bookseller, whose shop was at the sign of the Ship in St. Paul's Churchyard. After Croke's death the appointment was obtained by Benjamin Tooke of London in 1669, with whom John Croke was associated in 1671. James II. granted the office of King's Printer in Ireland to James Malone, a Roman Catholic alderman of Dublin. William III., on his expedition to Ireland, brought with him a printer named Edward Jones, and a press at which his proclamations were printed. After the termination of the war in Ireland the post of King's Printer was granted to Andrew Croke, son of John Croke, already mentioned, in trust for his father's children, and he held the office at the end of the seventeenth century. During the closing years of that century there were, besides the King's printers, a few typographers in Dublin, and of their productions particulars are given in the Appendix to this paper. They appear to have been chiefly occupied with reprinting English publications. Of these printers may here be mentioned Joseph Ray, who printed the first Dublin newspaper, and published the original edition of Molyneux's Case of Ireland. During the seventeenth century several books in connection with Ireland were published in London. Numerous tracts and pamphlets emanating from thence were circulated for the purpose of promoting political and other objects. Other English publications of the time were avowedly intended to expose what they designated the natural stupidity and simplicity of the Irish.

We may now turn to our next section—the bibliography of publications of Irish authors, and in connection with Ireland, printed on the Continent in the seventeenth century. Most of these were in Latin, but some were in Irish, English, French, Italian, or German. The places at which these works chiefly appeared were as follows:—

Antwerp, Bologna, Bolsano in Tirol, Boulogne, Brussels, Cologne, Douai, Dunkerque, Frankfort, Innspruck, Lille, Lisbon, Louvain, Lucca, Lyons, Madrid, Mentz, Milan, Mons, Naples, Paris, Passau, Prague, Rome, Rouen, Spira, St. Malo, St. Omer, Saltzbach, Trient, Vienna, Würtzburg. The books published at these places varied in

size from the folio to the octodecimo. In point of extent the greatest of them was the collection of the works of Duns Scotus in twelve folio volumes, edited entirely by expatriated Irishmen, and published at Lyons in 1639.

Somewhat later in date were the folio volumes in which other exiled Irish scholars—Colgan and Fleming—transmitted to posterity surviving remnants of the ancient Gaelic Literature of Ireland. It may be added that few European publications of their age are now sought for with greater avidity, or rank higher in money value than some books published abroad by Irish editors of the seventeenth century. The Irish authors who wrote in Latin usually added to their names on the title-pages the word “Hibernus.” In some cases they mentioned the part of Ireland to which they belonged, as in the case of Dr. John O’Dwyer of Cashel, who styled himself “Casseliensis,” on the title-page of his treatise “*Querela Medica*,” published at Mons in 1686.

The books in the Irish language printed within this period were published at Brussels, Louvain, and Rome. Of books in English by Irish writers published on the Continent in the seventeenth century, two by Captain Gerald Barry deserve special notice, and are of extreme rarity. The first—a folio volume, with plates, published at Louvain in 1626—contained a narrative of the famous siege of Breda, at which the author, with a regiment of Irish soldiers in the service of Spain, took an active part. Barry’s second work, also in folio, with plates, issued at Brussels in 1634, was a discourse on military discipline, with a treatise on fortifications and fireworks. The author indicated his nationality by styling himself “Garet Barry, Irish.”

In the French language many publications were devoted to the Life and Purgatory of St. Patrick. A French version of the History of the Geraldines of Ireland, published in 1697 at Dunkirk, is, from its extreme rarity, now regarded as one of [the] chief treasures of the bibliophiles of that town. In a similar category is the French narrative of affairs in Ireland, issued in 1696, without indication of the place of publication, or the name of the printer.

Of the works in Italian connected with Ireland are the account of the battle of Benburb, 1646; John de Burgo’s narrative of his five years’ travels; the voyages of Giovanni Battista Pacichelli, 1685, unnoticed by bibliographers; and the description of the rejoicings at Rome by the Irish there on the birth of the Prince of Wales. There are also large works in Italian on Saints Patrick, Brigid, Malachy, and Silanus, printed at Bologna, Venice, Naples, and Lucca.

In German we have a version of the travels of Thomas Carve of Tipperary, who served as a military chaplain to the assassin of Wallenstein.

## XIV

OBITUARY NOTICE—ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY<sup>1</sup>

Our late Librarian and Vice-President, Sir John T. Gilbert, was the son of John Gilbert, who was Consul for Portugal and Algarve in Dublin. He was born in Dublin in 1829, and displayed very early a taste for historical study and investigation. In 1851, when only twenty-two years of age, he wrote an essay on the Historical Literature of Ireland. In 1855 we find him Hon. Secretary, along with our former President, Dr. Todd, of the Irish Archæological and Celtic Society. "To the exertions of the two secretaries it was mainly owing that that Society was, for many years, able to continue its publication of various works of the utmost importance in the history of Ireland" (Dr. Graves). His well-known and standard work on the "History of the City of Dublin" was commenced in the *Irish Quarterly Review* in 1852. It was afterwards brought out in a greatly enlarged form in 3 volumes, 8vo, during the years 1854-59. He joined the Academy in 1855, and was elected on the Council thereof in March, 1856. In consequence of his extensive knowledge of books and of Irish literature, he was appointed to the Librarianship of the Academy, which office he filled for thirty-five years, until his death. The Academy marked its high sense of the value of his "History of the City of Dublin" by awarding him, in consequence of that work, its Cunningham Gold Medal in 1862. In 1867 he was appointed Secretary of the Public Record Office, without his having been already in any public employment—a sign of the estimation in which he was held by the Irish Government of the day. He held that office until the abolition of it in 1875. As custodian of the Academy's ancient Irish Manuscripts, his attention was drawn to the desirability of reproducing and publishing the most valuable of them; and it was at his suggestion, in 1869, that the Council of the Academy began the work with the publication of the oldest of them, the "Leabhar na h-Uidhri," under his editorship. In 1892, the Royal University of Ireland, to show their appreciation of his services to Irish historical literature, admitted him to the degree of LL.D., *honoris causâ*; and in 1897 the Lord Lieutenant of

<sup>1</sup> R.I.A. Minutes, Session 1898-99.

Ireland conferred upon him the honour of knighthood. His paper, read to the Academy in June, 1896, "Notes on Irish Bibliography"—Notices on Books by Irish writers, or in connection with Ireland, printed before A.D. 1600, was continued in June, 1897, by Notes on similar books printed in the seventeenth century; but this valuable work, as it doubtless would have been, was left unfinished at the author's death; it is, however, preserved for consultation in the Manuscripts room.

The many works of Sir John T. Gilbert display his great ability, accuracy, conscientiousness, and acquaintance with the subjects in question; they indicate also his untiring industry and perseverance, without which he could not have accomplished all that he did. There is good reason for the belief that his days were shortened by his devotion to his life-work.

Sir John T. Gilbert was a Member of the Senate of the Royal University of Ireland, also Trustee of the National Library of Ireland, and Governor of the National Gallery of Ireland. He was a Member of the Council of the Pipe-Roll Society of London, also Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, London, and a Member of the Bibliographical Society, etc.



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